

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,


WITH A

COPIOUS APPENDIX,

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P O S T S C R I P T,

&c. &c. &c.



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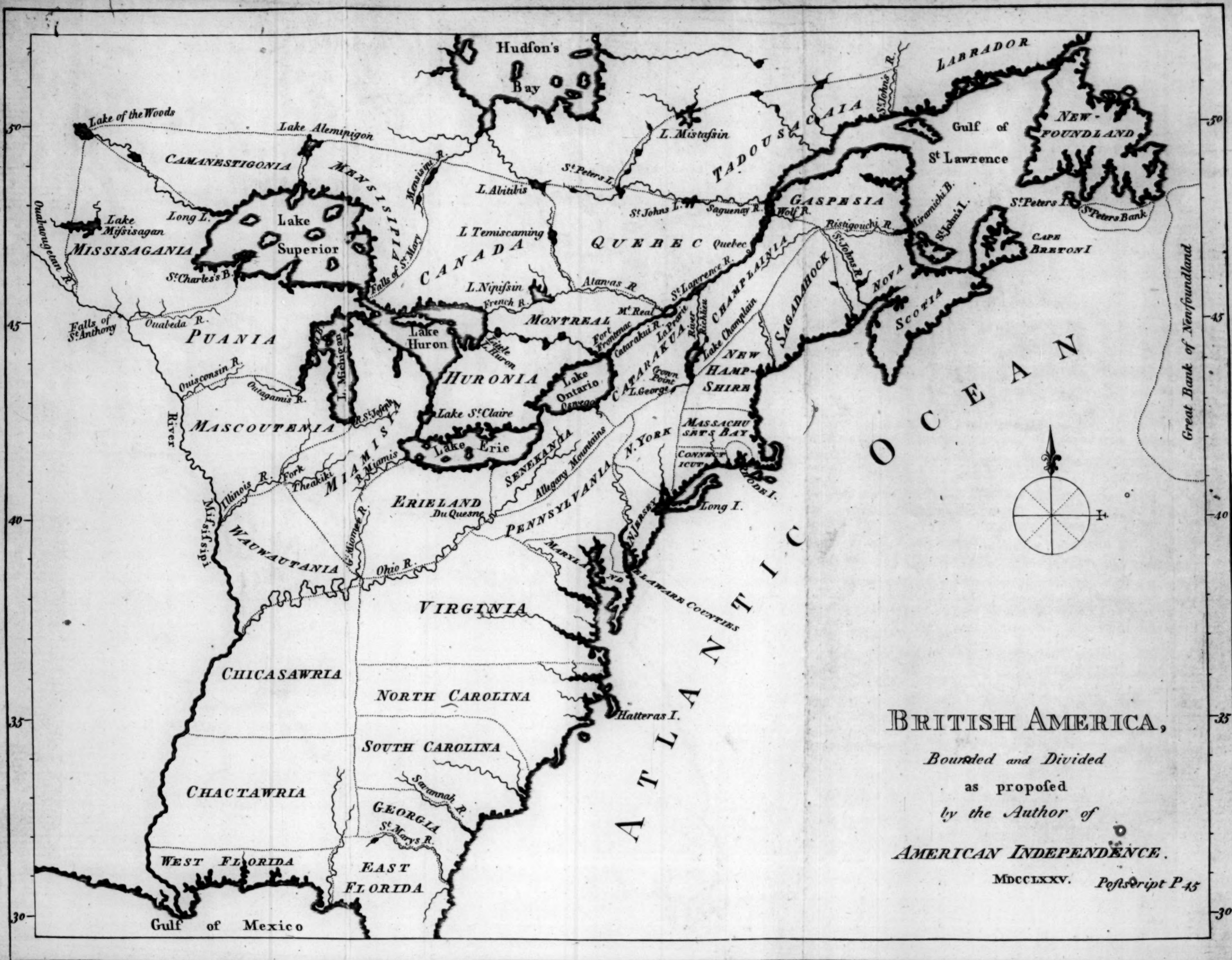
WITH A



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AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE
THE
INTEREST AND GLORY
OF
GREAT-BRITAIN.
A NEW EDITION.

To which is added,

A copious APPENDIX, containing two additional Letters to the Legislature; a Letter to EDMUND BURKE, Esq; controverting his Principles of American Government.

AND

A POSTSCRIPT, containing new Arguments on the Subject; A Draught for a Bill proposed to be brought into Parliament for restoring Peace and Harmony between Great-Britain and British America, and for perpetuating the same:

Together with

The essential Materials for a proposed Grand British LEAGUE and CONFEDERACY, to be entered into by Great-Britain and all the States of British America.

The whole of which shews, beyond Denial or Doubt, that by granting the Colonists an unrestrained civil Freedom and *Legislative Independence*, we may most effectually secure their future *Commercial Dependence upon*, and consequently shall best promote the Interest and support the Glory of, Great-Britain.

It is not to be hoped, in the corrupt State of human Nature, that any Nation will be subject to another, any longer than it finds its own Account in it, and cannot help itself. * * * * *

No Creatures suck the Teats of their Dams longer than they can draw Milk from thence, or can provide themselves with better Food; nor will any Country continue their Subjection to another, only because their great Grand-mothers were acquainted. This is the Course of human Affairs, and all wise States will always have it before their Eyes.

Trenchard on Plantations and Colonies, in Cato's Letters, No. 106. Anno 1722.

L O N D O N :

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M.DCC.LXXV.

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BRITAN
NICVM

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EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To Sir GEORGE SAVILE, Baronet.

IT is not only as the brightest ornament to the following essays, in the cause of independence, that the writer uses the liberty of prefixing to them your name, but being of opinion, that your actions will also best illustrate the principles he wishes to inculcate, he hopes to derive from it all the advantages of a well-selected motto. Feeling only for the public, you will suffer even your own merits to be made the theme of praise, so long as the public interests shall be thereby promoted. It is thus that your example will have its due effect; it is thus that your patriotism will be reflected from a thousand mirrors; and that, instead of exerting a single voice in the senate, you will harangue from a thousand rostrums at once; inciting in all the nations, to whom are known the English laws and language, a love of virtue, and a resolution to be free. It is this appeal to distinguished worth in real life, that gives the surest efficacy to the precepts of the moralist; it is this which induces the lips of the orator with the powers of persuasion, and is the kindling incentive to a virtuous emulation. How glo-

rious the privileges of patriotic virtue! Not limited by the scanty measure of personal labours, not confined to one age or empire, they extend to unborn times and nations, and the patriot is the common blessing of human kind. As an Aristides, a Brutus, or a Cato, hath oft given birth to British patriotism; so shall Britons, in some distant period, and future Americans, catch the same generous flame from the great example of the Savile of these days.

Such indeed is the present low estate of public spirit amongst us, that a man hath need of some fortitude, who, amongst the generality, would so much as contend for the reality of its existence. Nay, it hath not been discarded by the bulk of the gross-minded vulgar only, but our very philosophers too, so deep is the taint, have told us, that wisdom is not the portion of that man, who can sacrifice his time and his peace, by taking an active part in public affairs; and yet, notwithstanding the doctrines of these epicurean sages, and as little regarding the united ridicule of the thousands, and the ten thousands of their implicit disciples, I am not ashamed to acknowledge myself one of those weak mortals, who can believe, that the ease and luxury of life are contemptible in the eyes of a good man, when his country demands his labours, his counsel, or his sword. Being of opinion then, that patriotism is a real, an exalted virtue, I must necessarily think, that to decline its duties,

ties, is a meanness unworthy the manly character, and that its wilful violation, is the most atrocious of crimes. I believe too, that this virtue burns with no small ardour in many a British bosom; nay, I am credulous enough to think, that besides the instance I have particularly singled out, it is to be found even in the House of Commons: there, I confess, its growth is not very abundant; for, it is not of a nature to thrive in the same soil, which the occasional occupier must needs sow with the noxious seeds of prostitution and bribery ere he can secure possession. Happy, could we say of this seed, that “it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption;” “it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory:” but we are assured, by unerring wisdom, that “men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles;” and our own experience hath invariably taught us, that in the House of Commons, “a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit” alone. And until there shall be opened clean doors into that House, by which the members may enter undefiled, by the base arts practised in elections, must we not know, that the real patriot, he who is incapable of debauching or invading the rights of his fellow-citizens, is to be looked for without those walls, and not within them? And except these unpolluted doors shall be opened without much farther delay, will not that House, already the sink of corruption, inevitably become the putrid grave
of

of the constitution?—though not, I trust, its annihilation. How severe, or how lasting might be this convulsion, this dissolution of the state, it is difficult to imagine, but that, as heretofore, it would only perish for a season, like a grain of seed-corn, and, like that, be restored again, with a reduplication of the principles of life and vigour; I am happy in having an assured confidence.

Since I am now addressing myself to the public, Sir George, no less than to yourself, it is fit I should remind them, that your parliamentary integrity, is only a natural consequence of those means by which you became a member. In one, as in the other, neither corrupting nor corrupted, you stand a noble exception to a general rule; in which, we clearly see, how valuable would be an independent, an upright parliament. Let but the whole of the representative body be elected by the unbribed, and unbiaſſed ſuffrages of the freeholders, and we ſhould once more behold the Houſe of Commons an aſſembly of patriots, the terror, not the tool of bad miniſters; the bulwark, not the abuſers of the people.

Perhaps too, the public may be more indebted to you than they ſeem to conſider, for having, by an uniform conduct, through a ſeries of years, effectually overturned the darling, but infamous maxim of modern politicians, that *every man hath his price*, a ſentiment which could only ariſe in the baſeſt
and

and most degenerate heart. Notwithstanding the contrary is a truth, far better established than any the most notorious historical fact whatever, all history being enriched with numerous instances of it; and that it might be corroborated in the humble and unrecorded scenes of private life, by every man, whose friends are selected from the wise and good; and notwithstanding every human heart ought to revolt at so shocking a proposition, yet, it is certain, such is the prevalence of any opinion, how ridiculous soever, which falls in with our sordid devotion to avarice, that master-vice of the times! that we continually find this degrading maxim in the mouths, even of those whose characters in the world are yet respectable. This strange language is very often to be imputed to a weak intellect, or extreme ignorance, and very often to an absence of thought, or that wretched supineness of soul, which, for the sake of ease, always adopts the mode of thinking and speaking which is most in fashion. But when men of understanding, of reflection, and learning, become the controversial champions of this tenet; when they enter the lists in form, make a display of their armour, and their arms, and boldly challenge all opponents, what are we to think? Little do they seem to reflect, that they have no way of coming off with honour, but by retiring from the field, and wholly abandoning a bad cause; for so long as they maintain it, do they not, in the
very

very act, proclaim themselves villains in grain, or at best, only negatively honest, for want of temptation to be otherwise, and tacitly acknowledge, it would be a madness in you to intrust them with any secret or deposit, by means of which they could advance their fortune, without hazard from your resentment, or a gibbet ?

These unhappy men, do not only forfeit by this conduct, all title to trust and confidence in society, but what is still worse, they expressly exclude themselves from the benefits of religion, saying, in effect, that our Saviour's mission, for the purposes of teaching morality, and bestowing salvation on mankind, so far from being an instance of divine wisdom and goodness, was executed like the vague schemes of purblind mortals, to no manner of purpose ; for, so long as it is their assertion, that every man hath his price ; so long do they assert, that it is impossible to obey the laws of Christ even in a tolerable degree ; and to deny, that christianity is capable of inspiring her followers with an incorruptible integrity, is not only to betray a total ignorance of its doctrines, but to make war upon fact, and the common consent of mankind. Thus is this hackneyed proposition, examined either by the rules of reason or religion, evidently involved in palpable absurdity, and in rank impiety.

For the most part, they who propagate this wretched opinion, know not what they do ;
and

and would be exceedingly shocked, did they perceive, how they were at once subverting their own moral principles, and sapping the very foundations of all integrity in society, both public and private. So dangerous is it, unthinkingly, to swim with the stream of popular opinion ! especially since it is become the great master-stroke of the arch enemies of religion and virtue, to turn the course of this current in their favour, and to make it the vehicle of that poison they are for ever pouring in at the fountain head, in order to taint a thoughtless world. They use all the arts of a subtle and ingenious address, to withdraw our attention and respect from authors of sterling merit, and to insinuate themselves upon us as our only infallible guides. Under the mask of candour, they are most decisive and dogmatical, infecting with arrogance those ductile minds, which before were adorned with humility. In a stile of Attic elegance, they inculcate a frivolous and vitiated taste ; teachers of intellectual abstraction and refinement, they promote sensuality ; with an ostentation of humanity, they loosen the bands of society ; professors of morality, they demonstrate that it hath no foundation ; deep in all philosophy, they assure us, that truth is the only thing we ought to pursue ; that it is most difficult to attain, except with their assistance ; and when attained, they shew us as clearly, that it is not worth our pains ; and, like superior intelligences, so very refined and

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spiritual,

spiritual, (as they would have you believe) as to look down upon human nature as upon a lower order of beings, and to contemplate, with an unmoved indifference and composure, the blindness and prejudices, the little passions and anxieties of a fretful and miserable world, they inform us, that wisdom consists in this sublime apathetic insensibility, while they, all the while are, in reality, sacrificing their own tranquillity, in carrying on perpetual hostilities against the invincible powers of truth, religion, and common sense, and yielding up the guidance of their restless and indefatigable pens to pride, spleen, vanity, caprice, and sordid avarice. By prostituting to the worst of purposes a flashy wit and specious eloquence, they captivate the shallow, the luxurious, and the gay; while, for the relish of those who have understandings somewhat superior, but more gloom and malevolence in their hearts, they season their pernicious compositions with a poignant irony and ridicule, which is usually heightened in proportion as the object is sacred or divine. When referring to the Deity, and to the incomprehensible things of heaven and eternity, one might expect, even of a philosopher, some diffidence, some sobriety and decency; but this were too great a condescension from the mad genius of Geneva, the scribbling buffoon of Ferney, or that "fattest hog of Epicurus's sty," the "see-saw sceptic from the
 " re-

“ remotest North *.” With these “ men of
 “ renown,” as leaders of the van, and the
 Walpolian state-prostitute to conduct the rear-
 guard ; even the disorderly, the coward clans
 of vice and seduction, are an overmatch for
 the feeble guards of virtue in most fashionable
 minds. By strengthening the party of the
 dissolute, and encouraging the unmanly, un-
 principled, impious, and dissipated spirit,
 which marks the character of the times, and
 by making a jest of every thing serious and
 noble ; they insinuate themselves into the un-
 guarded bosoms of that class of triflers, and
 become their oracles. The business is now
 done, for the fashionable world is the mint,
 where common opinion first obtains its stamp
 and currency ; circulating thence throughout
 the community like current coin, and, like
 that too, giving consequence to its possessor,
 in proportion to his store of this fictitious,
 this imaginary wealth. Hence it is, that in
 almost every fashionable circle, from the peer
 to the ‘prentice, from the profound writer
 of stuff, called *Essays on the Origin of Evil*,
 to the novel-reading miss in her teens, we
 are for ever pestered with trash, that is the
 bane of morality, and the disgrace of rational
 beings. And while the polite praters vainly
 imagine they are displaying their own talents
 and erudition, their knowledge and liberal
 way of thinking ; they are only the mere
 ecchoes of those teachers of falsehood ; the

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simple

* Heroic Epistle to Sir W. Chambers.

simple and obedient tools, by whose agency those cunning engineers are undermining all the defences of religion, of public spirit, and of private virtue.

It is matter of no small astonishment and concern, to observe how much an indifference to moral rectitude, a habit of evading the toil of thinking, and this passive resignation to the sentiments and principles of others, debilitate the human mind, though naturally active and vigorous, and subject it to the reproach of yielding to the grossest credulity, and even of assenting to manifest contradictions. Nothing is more common, than for those, who have the Walpolian maxim we have been speaking of always at their tongue's end, to form to themselves, I know not how, an ideal distinction between public integrity and private honesty. While they lay it down, as a fixed principle, that the senator may be corrupted by a court bribe, to injure or oppress his country, they will yet allow, that he is rigidly just in all his private dealings; that he is the kindest landlord, the gentlest master, the tenderest relation, the truest friend; so very moderate in self-gratification, and of so humane a nature, as to bound his expences very far within his income, and to distribute large sums in secret charities, with a minute attention to the measures of distress amongst the objects of his beneficence. And, is it to be believed, that such a man—that a Savile

vile is to be made a traytor?—Ye ecchoes of absurdity, think and blush!

But whatever hopes may be entertained of the ingenuous majority of mistaken persons, I know there is yet a party, whose incapacity for a generous thought, or whose malignity is such, that when, by the mention of his name as a sincere patriot, they have been struck dumb with uneludible conviction, and obliged, in their own despite, to confess his virtue, have yet sought to tarnish its lustre, by base insinuations, to the prejudice of his understanding. These insidious creatures are not sparing of cold panegyrics on his general character; but, with much pity for the weakness of a well-meaning man, they lament that he should be so deluded; they are amazed, forsooth, that he can fancy he is serving the public, by opposing and embarrassing the necessary and wise measures of government; they are sorry, that such a man should keep in countenance others, who only act the patriot, in order to obtain their own foolish ends; and they must needs say, they think him somewhat too much attentive to popular clamours and popular praise, and too much guided by a blind popular zeal. But what they are most anxious to inform you of, with some parade they affect to suppress. In tenderness to him, they do not choose to speak freely on that head—there is no necessity to explain themselves—they are convinced he is ignorant how much he is imposed on—but they take care, however, before

before they have done, by certain circumlocutions, by broken sentences, and unambiguous givings-out; to inform you, in pretty plain terms, that he is no better than the dupe of a dangerous party, a mere puppet, played off by the crafty leader of a faction, attached to his interest by flattery alone, and courted, not for his own intrinsic importance, but merely to grace the cause with a name, upon which the silly multitude have thought fit to bestow an unmerited popularity. What a return for the labours of a life, devoted to the service of that community, of which these wretches compose a part! But no benefits can touch the viprous heart of ingratitude! Nor shall malice and envy ever sleep, while a spark of virtue remains to bless mankind! Merit, however raised to such an elevation, is a mark placed far above the idle efforts of their fever-shaken distempered nerves. Exposing their own hideous deformity, they aggrandize by the contrast, that virtue they mean to depreciate, and madden with self-inflicted torment, their peculiar curse. These ingrates to their benefactor, stupid as they are, ought to know, that though his character, like things most sacred, may be profaned, yet that the broad ægis of wisdom and virtue renders it invulnerable.

Forgive me, Sir George, that I say these things in an address to yourself! As humility itself, in a private station, cannot decline to make those honest boasts which bespeak its merit, when that is basely traduced; or ungratefully

gratefully forgotten; so the public labourer, will not be offended, that his honest fame is held up to his countrymen, for the purposes of exalting truth, and subduing falsehood, as an incitement to a steady and high spirited patriotism, and an encouragement to the timid in the public cause: while to those foul harpies, who wallow in the filth of corruption, and batten at the ever-bleeding wounds of their country; and to those minor miscreants, doomed by their dulness, and their abject meanness, to remain the drudges of wickedness without its wages; it shall serve as an adamant mirror, before whose brightness, if they have power to open their fascinated eyes, they shall shrink at the withering blast, like adders in a consuming fire; praying, but praying in vain, to lose the bitter consciousness of their own infamy.

I shall likewise hope for your pardon, on this occasion, because you understand the world well enough, to know the endless shifts and evasions of the disingenuous and perverse, who persist, with unparalleled effrontery, to deny the most undoubted truths, until they are borne down by the weight of demonstration and the force of facts. They will deny, in turn, the existence of every command in the decalogue; and you will dispute with them in vain, until you open the bible, and reduce them to the necessity, of either giving up their argument or their senses. So, when any one shall undertake to reply to these maligners of mankind, if he content himself with

with proving ever so clearly from nature, from reason, or religion, that a real patriot may be found, he had as well argue with the stones under his feet, unless he produce the man, and put it upon his adversaries to disprove the fact.

If by those, who are themselves incapable of a generous sentiment, and cannot believe a disinterested affection can warm the human breast, I should be accused of an unworthy design to flatter you in this epistle; I shall be ready to acknowledge the charge, whenever they prove that I have, in any particular, exceeded the truth, or endeavoured to mislead you into a deviation from the paths of honour. And I would observe, that he, who is the professed friend to every virtue, and the declared enemy of every vice, may indeed, and ought to be applauded; but puts it out of the power of even a * Decius to flatter him—except to acts of goodness. Not having any favourite vice to be soothed, he is only assailable on the side of virtue; and the exquisite satisfaction, arising from the just praise of virtue, being one of the rewards designed it by Providence, and intended also to animate it, and urge it onward to its final goal with unremitting ardour, to bestow it where it is due, is therefore as much the duty of every good man, as it is to “ render
“ unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar’s.”

I am, S I R,

Your grateful Countryman,

The A U T H O R.

* Shakespeare’s Julius Cæsar.

P R E F A C E.

THE same motives, which first prompted me to publish the following letters separately, have, upon farther consideration, determined me to do it in a collective form. To the generality, it may not, perhaps, be a recommendation of them, when I assure my readers, they wholly proceed from a strong conviction of mind, and a zeal for the cause of liberty, and not from a view of serving, or of distressing any party or particular person whatsoever, except the arguments they contain shall make converts to my political creed concerning America; I fear they are not very likely to please any party, for Britons of all parties, and of almost all denominations, seem far too unanimous in wishing to tyrannize over their brethren on the other side of the Atlantic. Happy, most happy, should the writer esteem himself, could he entertain any flattering hopes, that his plain and humble pen might inspire his countrymen with more generous sentiments! But are not his countrymen the brave sons of freedom? lovers of justice, and by nature generous? He will then—he must entertain these pleasing hopes. To know, that he had thus influenced a single individual, would afford him reflections, that would more than counter-balance the ordinary evils of life. If, however, he had no other satisfaction on this occasion, it would yet be sufficient, that his American kindred should say, ‘There was ONE Englishman an advocate for our freedom;’ but I trust there are, in the private and independent walks of life, many of the same sentiment; and that their numbers will daily increase, as a free discussion of the
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parliamentary pretensions to the sovereignty of America, shall more and more discover their total want of foundation; and, I am very far from despairing, that this truth shall, ere long, be acknowledged, even by the minister and the legislature. We may naturally expect, however, that they will be the last amongst the intelligent to receive this doctrine; for long and established habits form, even in liberal minds, very inveterate prejudices. Accustomed so long to govern, and habituated to the regular exercise of authority, they will find it very difficult to believe, that it ought to be lodged in any other hands; and they must be above the common weaknesses of our nature, could they part with it without an internal struggle, since a love of power is, perhaps, the most deep-rooted of all the human passions. But, for the honour of human nature, and the glory of this free nation, I must believe, that our legislators will, in the end, gain this noble victory over themselves. Could I suppose a British minister of state to have a few leisure moments, from the drudgery of his office, and the worse drudgery of sopping the hungry hounds that are for ever ready to devour him; from directing the endless schemes and manœuvres of the ministerial campaign, and from superintending their operation. Could I suppose a minister, I say, to have so much leisure from all these avocations, for seriously contemplating the present alarming situation of his country, and for bestowing a little fore-thought upon what will probably be its fate, in a very short period of time, unless some great reformatations take place; and, could I farther suppose this minister, turning his eyes within himself, to meditate upon what it is from which he can hope to derive any real satisfaction; to examine thoroughly the cobwebs of all mysterious and arbitrary policy, and the rotten pillars of his state and power; and, when sufficiently disgusted with their loathsomeness and folly, could I then imagine him to
revolve

revolve in his mind, how pleasant it would be to carry on the public business on a liberal and simple plan, pure from corruption, and uniformly friendly to freedom; I have not a doubt but he would most ardently wish to embrace such a plan. How gladly, if a man of sense, and a lover of integrity, would he exchange for it, his toils and perplexities, his provocations, his anxieties, and distracting cares; but above all, that consciousness of criminality, which no state-necessity can effectually erase from the mind of a minister, who, wanting the fortitude to forsake the wretched system of the base-minded Walpole, continues to work the wheels of government by the streams of corruption, and who, by being involved in the labyrinths, unavoidable in all systems but the right one, and, in order to avoid the most fatal of all imputations to a minister, that of doing nothing, finds himself obliged to commit frequent violations on the most sacred rights of his fellow-subjects, so that he may get forward at any rate with the work of the day, and keep the people amused, by letting them see he is doing something. Until fair experiment shall have convinced me of the contrary, I shall never, I believe, think otherwise, than that the most practicable system of government is, at the same time the most simple, upright, coercive, and immoveable. Founded in freedom, and the common good of the people, it will cherish the spirit of liberty as its vital principle; having no dangerous or selfish designs, it will affect no mystery; knowing the necessity of virtue, and the advantages of integrity, it will discountenance vice, suppress corruption of every kind, and be inflexible to justice; and thus, by affording general protection, it will find unanimous support. But, it being our more immediate business at present, to confine our ideas of reformation to what regards the North American colonies, which make, at this unhappy time, no small addition to that burthen which galls the ministerial shoulder. I have
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only to add, that I must firmly hold my confidence, that our present minister would, in the following letters, meet with the necessary hints and rudiments, from which, without the smallest difficulty, he might plan the means for easing himself of it; to the infinite advantage and glory of his country, to his own honour and satisfaction, and to the inexpressible happiness of the whole people of America.

As I am certain, that no party principles will betray me, to have written from any other motives than those I profess; so, when I assure the reader, that the style and manner in which I have done it are my very best, I hope he will be convinced, that I have not folly enough to aspire at literary fame; and that his candour will overlook the very many imperfections of this little work.



A M E R I C A N

INDEPENDENCE, &c.

To the LEGISLATURE.

L E T T E R I.

March 20, 1774.

EVEN the most ignorant perceive this to be a crisis of the utmost importance to Great Britain, and to North America: but it doth not appear that the most sage have yet formed a plan of proceedings that is likely to give content to both parties. With deference to the sentiments of others, and with a sincere desire of rendering a service to my country, permit me to offer a few thoughts on the subject, and to throw some hints in your way, which I do not perceive to have been as yet started by any political writer. It is most deeply to be lamented, that passion and prejudice, pride and self-interest, have evidently too much influence over the minds of most men, to suffer them to decide impartially and equitably in such delicate conjunctures as the present. We want now to discover, and to establish a principle of lasting union between our colonies and the mother country; while the measures of administration, the deliberations in parliament, the sentiments of political writers, and the language of the people at large, all tend to prove, that the most probable event will be mutual jealousy, animosity.

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mosity, and strife. It is the misfortune of this country, surely without necessity, that schemes of reformation, and plans of a great and comprehensive nature, for the general benefit of the people, are rarely or never formed before-hand in the peaceful closet of a provident minister; and, it is as unusual for them to attain their completion by dispassionate contemplation, and the calm determinations of wisdom. On the contrary, we suffer every trivial error and irregularity to ripen into mischief before we think of reformation; when we undertake it at last with minds heated to fermentation, and we perform it with rashness and violence. Let not, however, on this great occasion, any thing so intemperate and faulty mark your deliberations, nor leave a stain upon your measures. Reflect, that the fate of empires is now in suspense, and that the balance is in your hands. No patriots of any age or country ever had a nobler opportunity of immortalizing their fame; nor, what is infinitely more to be desired, of obtaining the inward reward of self-approbation for having given happiness to millions. Remember your duty to mankind; remember your duty to God. Let not the breath of anger or resentment sully your councils; let not jealousy or ambition poison your breasts, nor hang upon your tongues. Be calm, contemplative, candid, prudent, wise; let justice and benevolence rule your hearts; in one word, be Christians! embracing with love and charity your American brethren; and consulting their happiness equally with your own.

The two grand questions now to be decided are; 1. Whether or not the British parliament or legislature, hath the right of sovereignty over North America? And, 2. Whether or not a British parliament hath a right to tax the North Americans*?

Although the latter question be properly involved in the former †, since taxation is a part of legislation, yet being extremely simple and well understood, I shall consider it first, in order to get rid of it; so as it may not embarrass our discussion of the other, which it will be necessary for us to treat with all possible perspicuity. As for those who, with great warmth, maintain the right of parliament to tax the North Americans, surely they are rather to be pitied than argued with! Must they not be totally

tally ignorant of the principles of that inestimable constitution, under which they have the happiness to live? How then shall we expect them to be acquainted with the principles of the law of nature, from whence they flow? When I meet a man inclined towards this opinion, I do not contradict him; and I beseech him to avoid disputation above all things. I beg of him also to divest himself totally of every previous inclination for seeing the point in this or in that light; to consult immediately the great Mr. Locke, and other authors of note, and after a careful examination of the arguments for and against the question, to decide upon it himself impartially and honestly. I remind him likewise, that it is his interest, as well as for the advantage of his country, that he should discover the truth: but a matter of total indifferency on which side it lies. If this fail to set him right, I do not dispute with him myself, nor do I assume the countenance or manner of an opponent; but I intimate to him, that, were he of my opinion, it would afford him great satisfaction of mind; since it gives me a consistency of sentiment, by which I see every right of legislation perfectly consonant with the freedom and the happiness of mankind; and I then simply state my reasons for holding it. I have ever found this appeal to a man's own heart and understanding, the most successful way of enlightening the one, and improving the other. Very few indeed of those with whom I have thus reasoned, on the present subject of American Taxation, have gone away unsatisfied, or found a necessity of reading, in order to be convinced: but ignorance and obstinacy, heated by former debate, have sometimes rendered my endeavours ineffectual; and such as were notorious for a vicious ambition, or servility to the ruling powers, have generally remained immovable, though without producing one just or wise argument in support of their sentiments, or rather their assertions. Such men are not aware how much they lay open to the light that part of their characters they always mean to hide; and that there is as much dishonesty in that disposition which denies an evident truth, as in that which gives a false evidence, or takes a purse. It would have required no learning, but only common sense and common honesty, to have known that a man hath no property in that which another can *by right* take from him

without his consent, had not the world been pestered with writers of corrupt hearts, who, for wicked ends, have brought this clear proposition into dispute, and involved it in a casuistical jargon, which persons of plain sense, and too busy or too indolent for reflection, are apt to mistake for learning and superior skill; and to compliment it, first with doubting, and then denying upon trust, what they once understood and believed. But I trust, that characters so weak as these, so profligate as those, will have no influence with the British legislature; that its deliberations will be carried on with too much wisdom and too much dignity to give a hearing to the drivellings of shallow and impudent prattlers; or to suffer the unseemly violence of furious and tyrannical spirits, to discompose that serenity and divestment from passion, which ought ever to be observed in the presence of Majesty, and in the awful councils of the nation. Here I must express my concern, that it should seem to be thought by very sensible men, that it is necessary to appeal to antient times, in order to ascertain the right of a free subject not to be taxed without his consent, either in person or by representation. With as much reason might we go about to prove, that no ancient King had a right to take from every subject at his good pleasure, an eye or an ear. It is sufficient that we know any maxim in our law, to be at the same time a maxim of the law of nature, or demonstrably deducible from its fundamental principles. What is it to the purpose, whether such a maxim was received and acquiesced in only yesterday, or a thousand years ago? Truth is not the less truth, though mankind were in ignorance of it until lately. No mathematician, in demonstrating an astronomical problem, thinks it necessary to prove the properties of a triangle, a circle, or an ellipse; why then should the politician waste his time and embarrass his argument, with proving principles and axioms universally assented to by all just reasoners? not but that a maxim carries more weight and authority with it, as this of the necessary connection between taxation and representation, when we find it has been the uniform sentiment of all ages; and references to antient times, and to various histories, serve very properly to illustrate political arguments; sometimes facilitating their reception among the timid and suspicious, who are apt to shrink at bold

bold and honest truths, to which they have not been familiarized.

NOTES, &c. to LETTER I.

* Let me recommend to the readers perusal, an excellent pamphlet, under the title of Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania, to the inhabitants of the British colonies. It is printed for Almon.

† I think a noble Lord has lately asserted the contrary; but we shall probably be of the same sentiment, when we come to an explanation of our words. I here mean that just legislation only which is founded on liberty, and in which the people, either personally, or by their representatives, have a share. Every other species of legislation, being clearly an infringement on the inherent rights of mankind, is totally excluded from my ideas of government; so that confining myself to a free government, where the people have a share, it still appears to me, that taxation is a part, and included in the general idea of legislation. If it be the sole province and exclusive right of that branch, which consists of the people or their representatives, to grant money for the support of government; yet taxation is not completed, nor can it be carried into execution, until the other branches of the constitution have given their concurrence. A mere free gift of the Commons, without an act of legislation, would not be a *tax*; and we must remember, that though it be wisely provided, that in all taxations, the Commons alone shall *give and grant*, yet, that the Lords are not exempt from *paying*. May we not therefore say, with propriety, that taxation is a part of legislation.

LETTER II.

March 22, 1774.

TO every man of candour, I apprehend it must be evident, that 'Parliament hath not the rights of 'sovereignty over his Majesty's American subjects.' Every species, indeed of declamation and sophistry, have been made use of in order to shew that it hath, because it gratifies the pride of Englishmen in general, to think that that legislature, in which they feel themselves to have a share, should govern half the world: but there are not wanting an honest few who think more justly and more generously. Amongst this number, a writer who subscribes himself A. B. in the Public Advertiser of the 22d, deserves the thanks of every friend to freedom. Except in his idea of the country of America, having been by the prerogative the property of the crown, which, in the sense of the passage, signifies the *King exclusively*, I entirely agree with him in sentiment. He hath clearly and elegantly refuted the notion of parliamentary sovereignty; he has, with a generous warmth becoming an Englishman, appealed to the manly sense and to the virtue of his countrymen*. It would be an endless, as well as an useless work, to follow the many daily writers along all the mazes they wander through, in order to assert the sovereignty of parliament, and to justify administration in the harsh measures they are now carrying into execution. Notwithstanding their laboured and fine-spun performances, there is in reality no difficulty in the case. We have no need of profound learning, nor an intimate acquaintance with antiquity, nor even of the history of the respective provinces and their different origins; neither do we want copies of grants, charters, or acts of parliament, in order to judge of the question before us. If we comprehend but the most well-known principles of the English constitution; if we comprehend but a few of the plain maxims of the law of nature, and the clearest doctrines of Christianity, all which are so simple and plain, as to be understood by hundreds, nay thousands,

thousands, of plain men who know not that they are possessed of so useful a treasure, we have knowledge enough on this occasion. The only requisite wanting beyond this, is a heart strictly devoted to truth and virtue, without which we shall never understand any doctrine that does not soothe our passions.

The gospel of civil as well as religious salvation is hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes; that is, unto those who are not puffed up with vanity and false learning, nor blinded by pride, ambition, and self-interest, but whose minds are in a state of humility and innocence. But we have our political Popes, who would fain have us distrust our common sense and our feelings, and believe implicitly in their infallibility; nor do I doubt, but they would prove as faithful guardians of civil, as the Roman Pope is of religious, liberty, was it once put into their hands.

It is a capital error in the reasonings of several writers on this subject, that they consider the liberty of mankind in the same light as an estate or chattel, and go about to prove or disprove their right to it by the letter of grants and charters, by custom and usage, and by municipal statutes. Hence too we are told, that these men have a right to more, those to less, and some to none at all. But a title to the liberty of mankind is not established on such rotten foundations: 'tis not among mouldy parchments, nor in the cobwebs of a casuist's brain we are to look for it; it is the immediate, the universal gift of God, and the seal of it is that free-will which he hath made the noblest constituent of man's nature. It is not derived from any one, but original in every one; it is inherent and unalienable. The most antient inheritance cannot strengthen this right; the want of inheritance cannot impair it. The child of a slave is as free-born, according to the law of nature, as he who could trace a free ancestry up to the creation. Slavery in all its forms, in all its degrees, is an outrageous violation of the rights of mankind; an odious degradation of human nature. It is utterly impossible that any human being can be without a title to liberty, except he himself hath forfeited it by crimes which make him dangerous to society.

Let us then hear no more of a right in our present constituted parliament to govern the Americans, as being
derived

derived from any former exercise of this sovereignty, from the original dependence and protection of the emigrants and infant colonies, or from the tenour of grants and charters! The respective governments in America, are no longer dependent colonies; they are independent nations.—Not that I allow they ever were otherways than free: (although dependent) in the most absolute sense: All their original constitutions either were, or ought to have been on the true principles of freedom. They are not to be deprived of it as a man would lose an estate, by a flaw in their title; for I have already proved, that their title can have no flaw. Those who are so fond of placing them metaphorically in the relation of children to a parent state, and thence are childish enough to argue for a blind filial obedience, should recollect, that the power of a parent, even during childhood, doth not extend to any act of tyranny or injustice; and totally ceases when the child arrives at years of maturity. Then, as to the *property* of a child, a parent cannot take it from him even *with* his consent; and as soon as his independency puts it in his power to give it to his parent, he hath also the power of with-holding it if he think proper. In short, during infancy, he must be protected agreeable to the laws of equity; when arrived at manhood, he is free, and becomes his own protector. But analogy not being the safe road of reason, we resign it again, after this short excursion, to those who carelessly range the fields of politics for amusement; but are not solicitous, as we are, of reaching the abodes of truth and freedom.

The Americans, in common with the whole race of man, have indisputably an inherent right to liberty; and to be governed by such laws as shall best provide for the continuance of that liberty, and for securing their property. These are the hinges on which turn the welfare and happiness of society; these are the true, the only ends of civil government. But how are they to be obtained under the sovereignty of a British Parliament? Are not the legislators of every free state to be bound themselves by the laws they make? And, must they not tax their own purses, together with those of their constituents? Is there any safety for the people without these ties upon their legislators? Will a member of the British parliament be bound by any law enacted for, and confined to,

to, America? Must the purses of the Americans be at his mercy, while his own shall be exempt from every taxation he may vote? What English school-boy, so ignorant of the constitution, as to admit these absurdities! He must first go out into the world, and, by the help of a little political sophistry, unlearn his common-sense, and even his A B C.

The secure enjoyment of liberty and property, in which consist the welfare and happiness of a people, being the true ends of all civil government; this is the foundation alone on which we must argue concerning who have a right to govern. The answer is obvious and short. The rights of sovereignty reside in the people themselves; that is, they have a right to chuse their own governors. Minds that do not feel the force of self-evidences may deny the truth of this simple proposition: but they may be assured, that if they set themselves about controverting it, they will only bewilder themselves in their own subtleties, without telling us any thing that will benefit mankind. Don't we all acknowledge, that the Americans are a free people? But how are they free, if they cannot choose their own governors; if their laws be not enacted by their own representatives? In what doth our freedom consist if not in these very rights as the essence of it? In these rights which we have so often asserted, for which we have so often bled! That people cannot be free who are *not* governed by their own consent. Those who *are* governed by their own consent, *choose their own governors*. This is indispensably requisite towards the welfare and happiness of every people; it is an unalterable law of nature; that is, it is the law of God.

NOTES, &c. to LETTER II.

* The letter alluded to, is so well worth preserving, and so much to our present purpose, that I shall take the liberty of transcribing it for the use of my reader.

THE daily papers abound so much in idle declamation against the northern colonies, that it is not surprising, such admirable reasons are advanced in most companies, where the conversation turns upon this important
C topic,

topic, why force should be used to bring them to obedience. Neither is it much to be wondered at, that the people of England are so unanimous in their opinions, The same motives, which induce their rulers to abridge their privileges, make the people of England willing to abridge the liberties of America. The subjects of the King of Great Britain consider themselves as the sovereigns of his Majesty's American subjects; for, if the House of Commons have a legislative power over the colonies, the people of England must have the same right ultimately, as the House derive all their power from the people by election. But it would be worth an enquiry how the people of England obtained this sovereignty. Was it by the free concessions of the American provinces? By no means; or, did it result from the spirit of the English laws or government upon the migration of oppressed religionists and their settlement in those regions, which, by the prerogative, were the property of the crown †, and which the King, by the same prerogative, had the power of alienating without the consent of the people of England, particularly when such alienation was made to a part of his own subjects? It would be difficult to shew that this was the case, and I believe it has never been attempted. That the King should have the sovereignty of the colonies is but reasonable, is consistent with the spirit of the English laws. If English subjects settle upon the lands of the crown out of this realm, with the King's permission and consent, they do not thereby become a state independent of the kingly power; as they were subjects in England, so are they subjects in their new country; but they do not become subjects of subjects; despicable indeed would be their situation were such the case. On the contrary, they have the same rights which they had before, and same sovereign executive power. The rights of Englishmen are not confined to this little spot of land; but they follow the person as a shadow follows the substance; however, it may vary its situation, whether it goes North, West, East, or South. The House of Commons can claim no power of imposing laws on the colonists, for they derive no such power by election. The power of the Commons of Great Britain is circumscribed; from the spirit of the laws, they have only a legislative power, and that
power

power bears relation to the purpose for which it was given; which was to impose laws upon the people of Great Britain, but by no means the people of America, because the power of the electors extended only to themselves. The three orders united, i. e. the parliament have a most extensive power over the subjects of Great Britain, because every power in the state meets in that body: but considered with respect to the colonies, their pretension to such a power there clashes with the legislatures of those colonies, they can never subsist together in the same place. As to the relation of parent and child, in which Great Britain and the colonies are said to stand by some ingenious men, I confess it would be a tolerable good figure in a rhetorical flourish, or would sound very prettily in metre; but with submission, when the rights of many opulent and populous provinces are in question, something more than a simile or allusion ought to decide it. Let Englishmen, who have been admired for ages, for their regard to liberty, blush, when it is now said, that, by superior force, they would deprive three or four millions of their fellow-subjects of those rights and privileges to which they are so attached themselves. How depraved a mind would that individual be said to possess, who would defend his property at the risk of his life, exclaim against the aggressor as a lawless invader, and yet, at the same time, or a moment afterwards, behave in the same unjustifiable manner to his neighbour. Is this the people, will foreigners cry, who are so fond of liberty? No; we have always mistaken them: they are selfish, arbitrary, and tyrannical, fond of the privileges they enjoy; but they would exclude the rest of the world, nay, their fellow-subjects, from the same advantages—advantages which they have hitherto enjoyed in common with Englishmen. Is this the people so celebrated for humanity? No; they are most inhuman: they invade the most precious rights a human being can enjoy, and would render the rest of mankind miserable servile wretches.—'Tis really strange, the national character of Englishmen should have been so much mistaken!

A. B.

Tuesday, March 22, 1774.

† Although the King, by his prerogative, be vested with the power of making grants, it is only officially; and, I am of opinion, that ever since a legislative authority hath been established in any colony, his Majesty's prerogative of making grants within the same, ought, in strictness, to have been in his official capacity, as first magistrate of that colony, and not as first magistrate of England or Great Britain. As the people of Great Britain have no power beyond themselves, nor a shadow of a right in the soil of North America, so it is inconsistent with reason to admit, that the King can derive from them a power of granting away those lands; more especially on any conditions, which should give them a title to sovereignty over their American kindred, who have as good a right to freedom and independency as themselves.

LETTER III,

March 24, 1774.

AT the same Time that I hold that "Parliament hath not the Rights of Sovereignty over his Majesty's American Subjects," and that "these rights reside in themselves," I do not mean to promote an ungrateful forsaking of the mother country by her children, to sever and estrange the sons from the fathers; but where filial duty and obedience ceases, to substitute in its stead a brotherly affection, a manly and independent friendship, which naturally takes place where the parent hath truly loved and exercised his authority for the sole end of promoting the welfare of the child, without a view to self-interest, or the gratification of pride, ambition, or other vicious passion. I would consider the American governments, like that of Ireland, as sister kingdoms; and I would cement a lasting union with them as between the separate branches of one great family. * We know that it is impossible to effect such a family union, if the arrogance of the elder branch expect to govern the others, or even demand their homage; and how much more so, if it demand the use of their purses at its own discretion, as a return for former assistance, or under pretence of maintaining the honour and interest of the whole combined family. But while every one is left independent, and no other influence is made use of but that of sincere brotherly affection, a reciprocation of good offices, and a fair representation of the general advantage of the whole, there is little doubt but that all will be ready to contribute their respective shares, and that due respect and deference will ever be paid to the elder house. Family pride, no less than those advantages which result from unions of such a nature, will produce this effect, except we be ashamed of our family. I hope a selfish and tyrannical spirit in the English, will not make the Americans ashamed of their descent: but illustration is misleading us again into the tempting, but unsure, path of analogy.

analogy. Let us quit it once more before we lose sight of the direct road.

Every one of those writers, who endeavour to support the pretensions of parliament to the sovereignty of America by any shew of abstract reasoning, have, so far as they have fallen under my observation, either sat out upon defective premises, or from good ones, have drawn false conclusions; as needs must be in this case, until truth become a changeling. Plain sense, and an ingenuous mind, are sufficient to guard any one against their sophistry: but we have need of a little more penetration, and to be somewhat conversant in affairs, when we would dispute with a different sort, who plunge headlong into the depths of politics, and hurry us unprepared into all the intricacies of commerce; placing at once before our eyes, in an indirect point of view, that multiplicity of wheels within wheels, pulleys upon pulleys, and springs upon springs, which belong to the complicated machines of government and trade, instead of directing our attention to the first principles of motion, and the few master springs, on whose movements all the rest depend in a regular order and subordination. By these means they endeavour to confound, when they cannot convince us. But these are dishonest arts, the common tricks of designing men in every sphere. They are too stale and hackneyed, however, to impose upon men of sound and cultivated understandings. These know, that government and trade, as well as every science whatever, are established on a very small number of fundamental principles of the utmost simplicity, since they must be self-evident, or they are no principles at all; and they know also, that those who mean honestly, do always ultimately refer every maxim, by clear inferences, to some one or other of these simple, self-evident principles. All the subtleties and refinements, all the arguments that the wit of man can invent, will never be sufficient to justify any species of arbitrary dominion, while we retain a knowledge of this short and simple proposition—"the good of society is the end of civil government;" nor will they ever justify a discretionary taxation by a prince or government, the people being unrepresented, so long as we know, that "a man hath no property in that which another can by right take from him without his consent."

One of the most specious arguments made use of in support of a sovereign power in parliament over the Americans, is that drawn from a supposed necessity of equipping a powerful armament at a short notice, for the protection of the *whole empire*, as these gentlemen will have it: hereupon we are asked, if his Majesty is to have imposed upon him the arduous task of first obtaining a majority in two Houses of Commons in Europe, and about thirty provincial assemblies in America, before he can raise the necessary supplies? and the interrogators seem to plume themselves much upon the impossibility of carrying on the executive part of government under such restraints. Let me, in return, ask how we draw supplies from Ireland? Are they voted in the British House of Commons? Then, in the first place, I answer, that if an empire be too large, and its parts too widely separated by immense oceans, or other impediments, to admit of being governed on the principles essentially belonging to all free governments, it is an over-grown empire, and ought to be divided before it fall to pieces. The welfare and happiness of mankind supercede every other possible claim or pretension to govern. When we find ourselves subject to a distant power, which cannot possibly govern us on any other principles than those of tyranny, we have an inherent right, by the law of nature, and it is an indispensable duty to ourselves, and to our posterity, to shake off such an unjust yoke, and to erect a free government amongst ourselves. Those degenerate Englishmen, who are now seeking to enslave the Americans, would ill brook the government of the Emperor of Germany, if by any means he should lawfully inherit the crown of these kingdoms, and make Vienna the seat of government. Would they suffer themselves to be taxed by German ministers, or German diets? Would they not say to their sovereign, 'either come and reside amongst us, or delegate to your vice-roy all the prerogatives of the crown, and leave us, in conjunction with him alone, to tax and to govern ourselves according to our own just laws, and the rights of a free people?' Can any language be plainer? Can any doctrine be more intelligible or more equitable? But, in answer to the above interrogatory, I have another answer as intelligible as this.

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Establish the mode of governing which these persons contend for, and there will still be the same inevitable delay, with regard to the American supplies, as they would have us believe is peculiar to the mode which the people there claim a right to exercise. For tho' a British parliament might *vote* them with their usual alacrity, yet we must send to America to *collect* them. And if our armament cannot go on without first sending so far for this collection, its operations may as well be suspended a few days or a few weeks longer, in order to obtain it on *British*, rather than on *Prussian*, principles. But the truth is, we should not defer the equipment of any necessary armament one moment on this account †. Do we at present wait for the assembling of parliament, and a vote of supplies, before we arm in any just cause in which the safety, the interest or honour of the state is concerned? Doth not the executive branch of government, by virtue of its own powers, and in discharge of its duty, put the state in a posture of defence upon every alarm without loss of time, and then apply to parliament for its approbation and support? Is it ever withheld in a just cause? Hath the government no resources, no ways and means of its own, for discharging, or contracting for the future discharge of, these prompt expences of the state? If the uncertainty of meeting with like support from America, as they find in Great Britain, should be a clog upon our ministers in their warlike projects, might it not be fortunate for the people of both countries? Would it not make them extremely cautious and prudent how they involved us in continental politics and in German wars? No ingenuous man will, however, entertain a serious doubt of the readiness of the Americans to contribute their share to every necessary expence of government, so long as they shall find themselves in possession of their freedom ‡.

They *must* contribute their share; that is to say, they must preserve their own existence as a people, and defend their own property, under any form of government whatever. When men tell us, that an enlightened and free people are refractory; that they will not contribute their proportion of taxes; that at the hazard of their lives by the sword or the halter, they oppose and seek to subvert the government, and this for a succession of years; they tell

tell us, with a moral certainty, though perhaps without meaning it, that they feel some real oppressions, some real invasions made on their rights or liberties; for no other causes ever did, or ever will, produce a general and permanent opposition in the whole body of a people towards their governors. When we remark likewise, that, in the present contest, there is no religious zeal of persecution; no national antipathy or rancour, but quite the reverse; no introduction of a new code of laws by a foreign conqueror; no imaginary pretender to weaken the allegiance of the people towards their sovereign; nor indeed any one cause of dissatisfaction, but the avowed one; and that, on the part of the people, clearly justified on the obvious principles of the English constitution, can we hesitate a moment to pronounce what ought to be done? We ought to allow the Americans to tax themselves as an inseparable adjunct to freedom.

NOTES, &c. to LETTER III.

* It is not my meaning, that the American colonies should feel the effects of that narrow, and, may I not call it, barbarous policy, by which this country hath conducted herself towards her sister Ireland. Besides the liberty of raising her own taxes, and that share of legislation which she enjoys in her own parliament, I must confess, I see no reason why her trade should not be as free as that of Great Britain. Nature seems to have formed her for an union with the greater island. This once effected, on a liberal plan of equality in trade and freedom, any future jealousy would be an instance of that folly which is exposed in the fable of the belly and members. Humanity, wisdom, and virtue dictate an union. Should Ireland then rival us in trade, (which *I fear* it would never be in a condition to do) I know of no consequences but good ones. It might possibly tend to abate our luxury and extravagance, by a more equal division of wealth, and of circulating money in the two kingdoms; at the same time, that it would excite an industrious emulation in commerce, to the mutual benefit of both countries; and, consequently, augment the numbers of useful people, the riches and strength of the united state.

† If the British parliament will not relinquish its arbitrary sovereignty, let it not, however, double the injury by such oppressions, needless even to its own unjust policy.

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† I make

‡ I make use of the word *freedom* in this place, although I am arguing on a supposition of the British parliament continuing to exercise a sovereign power over the Americans, which I hold to be tyrannical in its principle; because the Americans themselves are as yet not averse to it, and universally breathe towards it none but sentiments of respect and submission, so long as it shall not be exercised to tax or to oppress them. Perhaps I may be asked, why do I, while the Americans are thus submissively inclined towards parliamentary sovereignty, officiously endeavour to withdraw their respect and obedience; therefore, as a general answer on this head, let me say once for all, that it is the dictate of my conscience; the same as it would be to warn any individual against ignorantly or heedlessly acquiescing in any selfish, crafty, or unjust pretensions of another person, which, in its natural and unavoidable consequences, must end in his own distress, and the ruin of his children, and all this without even benefiting his oppressor; but, on the contrary, rendering him criminal and unhappy, and preparing the way for his hasty downfall. If an ordinary regard to justice, and the duties of humanity, would have required this at our hands, in a case where only a few individuals were concerned, how much more is it the duty of a good citizen to sound the alarm, when he sees millions, and successions of millions thro' future ages, in danger of sinking into slavery, with all it's attendant curses! and I moreover think it my duty, to seize this occasion, of advancing my opinions against the supposed and pretended right of sovereignty in the British parliament over America, because too many writers, through misjudgment, dissingenuousness, or a base prostitution to the lust of tyrannic power, have taken advantage of this acquiescence on the part of the colonists, and of this principle with regard to the sovereignty being so generally acknowledged, as a good political axiom; to deduce from it a right in parliament even to tax the colonies. Thus, by proving *too much*, they raised a suspicion, that their first principles were unsound, and their leading proposition a mere sophism; and, upon examination, the reader, I flatter myself, finds them to be so. Leave our adversaries but possessed of this intrenched ground of *parliamentary sovereignty*, and the event of the contest, concerning the right of *taxation* will be doubtful; at least, they will so long be enabled to make a shew of maintaining the dispute; but when truth and fair argument have forced this feeble intrenchment, as I cannot but think they have now done, they will soon be driven out of the field; and the standard of freedom, supported by the hand of justice, be fixed there for ever.

LETTER IV.

March 25, 1774.

SOME theorists make a proposal to allow the Americans a representation in the British parliament, in order to justify our taxation of them; but from the small number of such representatives, which I have understood to be proposed, and their being restricted from voting, as some would have them, in any but American questions, I should fear that this proposal proceeded from a sense of shame, as not appearing to preserve even the common forms of justice, rather than from a strict and sacred regard to justice itself; or on a supposition, that this representation should be an adequate one, how would it be possible for the American representatives to serve their constituents in a proper manner. Could they, during every recess of parliament, visit their respective counties, as the members can in Great Britain? Could they, by a post letter, in a day or two, communicate to, or receive from, their constituents all necessary intelligence? or, could they meet and consult with them on all emergencies at a short notice? Must they reside a thousand or fifteen hundred leagues from their estates and counting-houses, in order to serve their country in parliament? Surely so weak a system of government must have been the visionary suggestion of a dream! But we may rest assured, that while the Americans are themselves awake, they will never consent to it. Will they trust their property, their freedom, their dearest rights, their every thing, in the hands of exiles, sent half-way to the Antipodes, in order to sit in council for their government! sent to reside in a luxurious, extravagant country, immersed in dissipation and corruption, and exposed to every temptation to betray them! Believe me, they are not so senseless. In the imaginations of these visionaries, the vast Atlantic is no more, I presume, than a mere ferry.

Those who have thought proper to indulge themselves in the way of declamation, tell us of the mighty things

done for the Americans by the mother country, and make a great cry of their rebellion and ingratitude. Nay, they are silly enough to urge these obligations as so many irrefragable reasons why the Americans are bound to obey the British parliament: on this foundation they build our right of sovereignty. But whoever heard of a suit prosecuted in any English court of justice for ingratitude? Is a frugal son, out of his little competency, and to the prejudice of his own children, obliged, by any law of England, or of nature, to minister to the extravagancies of a proud, luxurious parent, and in what degree that parent shall direct? Do the obligations of friendship deprive the person obliged of his future freedom and independency? Doth not an attempt to enslave, cancel, in a moment, every former obligation? These declaimers should keep in mind, that voluntary good offices are moral and religious, not civil or political, obligations. We may safely admit the whole catalogue of them in their full force, without thereby affording parliament the most shadowy pretension to the rights of sovereignty over the Americans: but, in justice to the character of that people, we must positively deny their existence; for they have been amply repaid in a profitable commerce to this country. Men must surely be lost to a sense of common decency, who would impose upon us as truth, that the part which government hath ever taken, in settling and assisting the American colonies, was solely or primarily to benefit the settlers; whereby they have been laid under this vast load of obligation to the mother country, which nothing less than a surrender of their liberty can conceal. Every honest, unprejudiced man, who will reason, and not wrangle, must acknowledge, that government's first object was, as indeed it always ought to be, to extend the commerce of this kingdom. This was the end: the countenance and assistance given to American settlers, was only the means, and therefore could be no more than a secondary consideration. When the colonies were in danger of falling a prey to France, was it pure *affection* and *generosity* towards *them*, or *jealousy of that ambitious power*, which caused Great Britain to take up arms? Did not her own existence depend on the preservation of her American colonies? so that, though we do not mean to say affection, for her kindred had no share in moving her

to draw her sword, yet, we presume, it will be admitted, that *her own safety, her own interest, her own honour*, were the only motives that could have engaged her to proceed such lengths at that juncture; and this will the more evidently appear, when we consider, that according to her notions of her right to the sovereignty, she saw the protection of her colonies, literally in the light of *self-defence*, and the more heartily undertook it accordingly. Surely, it must be a very bad title to dominion, which is built upon an error of her judgment, and a political selfishness. Had the *Hanoverians*, or *Dutch*, the *Prussians*, *Portuguese*, or *Hungarians*; had even the very *French*, with whom she fought, at that time stood in the place of her American colonies, she would, on the same principles, have been as lavish of her blood and treasure in their support, as *every one of them* hath heretofore experienced; and yet our opponents in argument, would not have maintained, that services of this kind, done to any such state, would have entitled this kingdom to the same right of ruling and of taxing it, as they contend for upon the same principle in the case of America. America, therefore, is not ungrateful; but is not rather Great Britain unwise, ambitious, and tyrannical? The obligations, in fact, were mutual, and as equivalent as the nature of things would admit; so that it would be a very nice, perhaps an impossible, but certainly an useless speculation, to decide which party hath been most benefited. The attempt is insidious, and he who makes it, is no friend either to America or Great Britain.

Many definitions of government have been given us, and a multitude of arguments employed, in order to shew the well-known necessity of one central supreme power being somewhere lodged in every empire, which shall be all sufficient of itself to perform the whole of legislation, and consequently taxation, as an essential part of it. But this will make nothing for the claims of parliament to the sovereignty of America. On the reverse, it only points out more strongly the error which most people have fallen into in their notion of the British empire. They will have it, that the British empire comprehends within it all his Majesty's dominions in America; whereas the American governments, except that of Newfoundland, are independent nations, having within themselves the rights
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and the actual powers of legislation, which cannot be taken from them, and lodged in the hands of British legislators, without a manifest wrong, and the subverting of so many free governments. Here we shall be told, that our Kings, in granting them their original charters and privileges, only exercised a prerogative which they derived from the constitution; wherefore the Americans are still dependent upon, and owe allegiance, not to the King alone, but to the state of Great Britain. But still I maintain, that the inherent rights of mankind, above all, their freedom, are not to depend on casuistical niceties and logical distinctions, (which, by the way, must be false, when they would disprove these rights) but are theirs independently of all the Kings, all the governments in the universe. Kings and constitutions of government are the creatures, not the creators, of these rights. They are held immediately of God himself, who gave them. Had the original charters to the American settlers been granted on the express and sole condition of acknowledging the sovereignty of parliament, even all that would not have bettered our present title one jot; for freedom, notwithstanding all that sophistry may say to the contrary, cannot be alienated by any human creature; much less can he enslave his posterity; and, therefore, such a contract could only be binding, so far and so long as freedom should not be infringed by it; but, with regard to a virtue in it, of depriving a future people, many nations, of their freedom, it would be null and void in its own nature to all intents and purposes; and, 'tis a mockery to our common-sense, to plead it as an authority to this end.

It is a mistaken notion, that planting of colonies, and extending of empire, are necessarily one and the same thing. Even the *intention* of the planters will not make it so, where the rights of mankind, and the nature of things are not adapted to it; where growing colonies are so situated and so circumstanced, that, in the nature of things, they cannot be governed by the parent state on the principles of justice and freedom; it is surely paying little respect to our understandings, and shocks every feeling of a free mind, to assert, that they must nevertheless submit to its oppressive rule. Having denied that America, when we drop the popular language, and speak correctly, is a part of the British empire, it will naturally be expected

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I should say what are, and where are its limits. The British empire, then, I hold to be confined to the British Isles *, and to the various *settlements and factories of our trade* in the different parts of the world, including *the government of Newfoundland*; together with the garrisons of *Gibraltar and Minorca*. As to the West India islands, they, as well as the continental colonies, certainly have a right to their independency, whenever they shall think proper to demand it, as they contain within themselves every necessary of legislation; but, if 'it be their choice, to acknowledge the sovereignty of the British parliament, as I apprehend it may, because, I believe, it will be their *interest*, I see no objection in that case to its being exercised. If it be true, as I believe all writers agree, that they would be depopulated, was it not for annual supplies of white men as well as blacks, this, and some other arguments, drawn from West Indian manners and sentiments, seem to indicate, that it is not in their nature, nor perhaps in their wish, to support an independency; nor ought we to forget, that their soil itself points out to them dependency, supplying only the means of effeminacy, luxury, and intoxication, while for *bread*, and the *necessaries of life*, its inhabitants must depend upon other countries. It matters not how much, in the nature of trading settlements, our first colonies might have been, (though were not in fact) nor at what period they might be said to become independent nations: it matters not that they were originally planted and protected by the government of this country, (I admit this planting; I make no reservation of those who fled from *persecution and want*) nor what were the intentions of government in so doing; for, having in them (the people of those colonies) the inherent and unalienable rights of freemen, they had therein the rights of independency, whenever they should think proper to assert them. Doth a man, who furnishes a young indigent relation with every necessary, who settles him in a trading accompting-house, who supplies him with money, and supports him with every species of protection whereby he prospers in the world, and raises a fortune; doth the man, I say, to whom he owes all this, obtain thereby a right, a legal title, to take from him, without his consent, a single shilling of this fortune? men of slavish principles would have us believe, that the
rights

rights of private persons, of subjects, being mean and insignificant considerations, are level with the capacities of, and may be comprehended by the people; but that the sublime and mysterious rights of empire are only to be judged of, and determined upon, by those who govern, and by those to whom these mysteries are confidentially revealed, in order to be treated of with due profundity and unintelligibility, not to enlighten the people, but to impress them with a proper respect for things so awful and sacred. True enough it is, that what hath too frequently been written concerning them, hath not been level with the capacities of the people, nor with any other capacities; for no man can understand what hath no sense or meaning, what is palpable nonsense.

NOTE, &c. to LETTER IV.

* I say British Isles, since I consider Ireland as naturally a dependant upon Great Britain, until an union shall take place, and make her an equal. In barbarous times, she might have remained separate and independent; but such a state would now be inconsistent with the self-preservation of the larger kingdom, and therefore the law of nature dictates an union or a curb.

L E T.

L E T T E R V.

March 26, 1774.

IT is demanded, with an air of confidence and imaginary triumph, ' Were not the first settlers in America British subjects? Did they not settle under the sanction of grants and charters? Hath not the kingdom, at all times, put itself to great expences in their support, and favoured them with many peculiar advantages in trade? Was not the last most expensive war undertaken solely on their account? Can any one be so absurd, as to imagine the kingdom intended to nurse and erect so many independent nations, instead of enlarging her own dominion? Ought not the Americans to repay us part of the expences of the war in particular, in order to enable us to discharge some part of that enormous debt it occasioned? and contribute their proportion towards the general expences of the whole empire?' To most of these questions, my arguments have already answered. Now, let me ask, in my turn,—Have any of the nations of the earth, especially the free ones, become what they are, in consequence of the *intentions*, and by a regular plan for that purpose, of the governments of those countries from which they are respectively descended? When we speak of the Greeks as an Egyptian colony, or of the Carthaginians as a colony of Phœnicians, do we the less consider them as free nations? or imagine that the mother-countries had a right to govern or to tax them, because the first settlers had once stood in the relation of subjects to those states? Let the *intention* of government, in planting a colony, be what it may, 'tis impossible it should take away an *inherent unalienable* right; such, for instance, as freedom. But what Britain principally intended, she hath certainly obtained—an extension of commerce. Again, let me ask, hath not Providence usually carried on its gracious designs of making great nations, and peopling new regions, contrary to the councils of the wise ones of this world? While we are plotting and contriving, toiling and sweating, treating and waging war, in

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order to gratify our own self-interest and pride, by extending our commerce, and enlarging our empire beyond all bounds, Providence takes care to frustrate our foolish and wicked projects, and often brings about the reverse of what we think to insure by the depth of our policy, and the strength of our arm. Let us take care that we do not provoke it to make us a scorn and a reproach to America, instead of its arrogant ruler. By adhering strictly to the principles of justice, and the rights of mankind, we may firmly unite and cement together our own interests with those of our sister nations in America, and remain ourselves to the end of time, a powerful and independent state: but let us dread, by a violation of these sacred duties, to pull down upon our devoted heads the mighty ruins of an over-grown empire. Let it be the peculiar glory of this free, this enlightened, this christian kingdom, to extend the influence of her religion and laws, not the limits of her empire! Nor let her entertain one anxious thought concerning the hackneyed notion of the progress of empire westward. Who are these presumptuous unfolders of the decrees of fate, these revealers of the hidden councils of God, that doom Great Britain to a speedy fall, when empire shall have fixed its seat in America? Are the dispensations of Divine Providence so uniform and regular, as to become the object of science and proud philosophy?—to be foretold by man, or calculated like the movement and appearance of a comet? Our *philosophical prophets* pretend to judge from similar causes producing similar effects: but they ought to know, that in *all essentials*, there is yet very little or no similitude between the state of Great Britain and any antient empire whatever: and I am not without faith, that there will always be wisdom and virtue enough in this happy island, to prevent its ever coming within that predicament. It behoves her, however, for instruction, to have a constant retrospect to them and their fate. Let her maturely reflect on the insatiable avarice and ambition, the enormous, the gigantic wickedness of bloody Rome. Let her consider also the Grecian, the Persian, and Assyrian empires, and carefully mark the grand causes of their overthrow. They were all erected on the rotten foundations of *Idolatry* and *tyranny*, (the very seed-plots of hell) they all fell the victims of their own mad ambition, and a lust of rule, that
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nothing could satiate less than the dominion of the whole earth. Where is the similitude ! Our religion, being a divine revelation, is confessedly perfect ; and the law of nature, no less divine, being the immoveable basis of our political fabric, the very soul of our constitution, this also is *perfect*. I say perfect, absolutely perfect ; for, whenever it hath the appearance of being otherwise, it is only from the want of a right interpretation, or a close adherence to its true principles. It is this immutable, this divine standard, we have to refer to in all our deviations, that hath preserved our constitution through all ages, and improved it till it is become the admiration and envy of all nations *. This is a principle of renovation and recovery from all corruption and decays ; this is a principle of immortality ! No other constitution ever had the same, or at least never preserved it until it was sufficiently understood, and properly valued by the people. This has, under a most singular Providence, been our peculiar blessing. I trust it will be the blessing of our posterity to the latest generations ; and that, when we shall have given birth, and the birthrights of freemen, to as many independent states as can find habitations on the vast American continent, that Britain still will be great and free ; the respected mother, the model, the glory of them all ! and I will, I must indulge the fond hope, that the pure religion, and the perfect constitution of Britain, will gradually spread themselves over all America ; and in every other part of the globe † so enlighten and operate upon the minds of men, as to become the chief instruments in the Hands of Almighty God of bringing about, in his due time, that universality of christianity, that harmony and happiness among the nations of the earth, which are intimated in the prophetic writings. Those prophetic intimations themselves, the peculiar fitness of the causes to the effects, together with a great variety of circumstances, that seem evidently tending towards this point, convince me, that it may be rationally hoped for ; while all the arguments brought to shew the probability of America becoming the seat of a mighty conquering empire, to which Britain shall, in length of time, be a province, appear to my apprehension, to be destitute of any foundation of the smallest degree of probability.

We are told, that empire hath been observed to make its progress westward ; that every empire hath had its infancy, its youth, its vigour, its declension, its death ; and that they necessarily follow each other with the same certainty as in frail life of man ; and lastly, we are reminded, that Great Britain hath past her meridian, and empire is now rising fast in America. To the first, I answer, that empire must needs have travelled westward from its source, except Europe had remained a desert ; that it also travelled East, South, and North, as well as West, witness China, Indostan, Abyssinia, Russia ; and that it hath already been in America, witness Peru and Mexico ; and that it hath also taken retrograde courses, witness Turkey and the Persian empire under Nadir Shah ; and with regard to modern Europe, I can see no probability why it may not remain to the end of time, divided in proportions, not much differing from the present. To the second argument, I have only to say, that analogical reasoning is always very fallacious, and that there is no analogy between things *mortal* and *immortal*. To the third, I must repeat, that Great Britain, having in her constitution the principles of renovation and recovery from corruption and decay, and the seeds of immortality (which no other state ever had) is in no great danger of a declension, so long as this world is likely to last ; and that the British North American states having, all of them, christianity void of persecution, as a light from heaven ; British freedom as a soul, and a spirit of commerce as the breath of life ; it must be thought next to an impossibility that any one of them should ever swallow up all the rest, and then extend its conquests beyond the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The times for " heroes and demi-gods " are past ; and the phrenzy for universal empire is somewhat out of date and out of countenance. They prevailed, and only could prevail, when the minds of men were in a proper tone for such extravagances ; when *the advantages of commerce, the true principles and ends of government, and the religion of peace and pure virtue*, were either wholly or very imperfectly known : besides, no searcher-into prophecy hath yet discovered in the womb of time, an empire that is to be so formidable to the liberties of the world ; and, if it be true, that the species, as well as the individual of mankind, obtains knowledge,
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wisdom, and virtue progressively, its latter days will, according to the nature of things, and by means of the Divine assistance that hath been vouchsafed it, to all appearance, be more wise, peaceable, and pious, than the earlier periods of its existence. To this end let every one labour; and his own happiness at least, if not the general happiness of mankind, will most assuredly be his reward.

NOTES, &c. to LETTER V.

* "I wish," says Lord Camden, "the maxim of Machiavel was followed, that of examining a constitution, at certain periods, according to its first principles, this would correct abuses, and supply defects." In this wish, every man, who hath a just sense of our inestimable constitution, will most devoutly join his Lordship. It is true, however, as intimated above, that our wise ancestors did, from time to time, avail themselves of such an examination, as occasion offered, and circumstances would admit. If the effects have been so great and so happy, ought we not to improve upon their example, and instead of suffering abuses to run on uncorrected, until they threaten a general ruin, would it be more than common sense, and common prudence, to adopt a *regular and periodical inquest*, for this most salutary purpose? Who so learned in the law and the constitution; who more the friend of both; who therefore so fit as his Lordship, for the generous task of framing a proper bill on this occasion? As it is his Lordship's proposal, where else shall we look for a volunteer; knowing his eloquence and senatorial abilities, on whom else could we rely, with so much confidence and hope, for obtaining so great a blessing?

† We are now sending a code of British laws to our settlements in India, and establishing courts to administer them.

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LETTER VI.

March 27, 1774.

WHEN we talk of asserting our sovereignty over the Americans, do we foresee to what fatal lengths it will carry us? Are not those nations increasing with astonishing rapidity? Must they not, in the nature of things, cover in a few ages that immense continent like a swarm of bees? Do we vainly imagine, that we can then hold the reins of government, and hurl our thunders on the heads of the disobedient? Where are we to stop? or, shall we pretend to circumscribe American populations? To say, "Thus far ye shall go, and no farther!"—No!—Swollen indeed must we be with the pride of dominion, and drunk with the fumes, if we can foolishly imagine these things*. It is high time that we opened our eyes to the unintentional encroachments we have been making upon the liberties of mankind, and to the necessity of setting bounds to our dominion. Without the American continent, the British empire will be large enough in all reason. But if government persist in maintaining our sovereignty there, it may possibly occasion our own destruction, but can be productive of no good to us, either present or future. After all that has been done to alarm the Americans for their rights as free men, and calling up their attention to a thorough investigation of them; after the flame of opposition hath been kindled in every breast, and now animates them as one man, it will be in vain to steer any middle course; to adopt measures for *light oppressions*, and compelling obedience to laws *moderately tyrannical*. We must either relinquish at once our claim to sovereignty, or fix on their neck with strong hand the galling yoke of slavery. We must either conquer ourselves or them. Justice, wisdom, humanity, and religion, leave us without a doubt which to prefer; and, should the latter be determined on, woe be to Great Britain! We may, indeed, by means of fleets and armies, maintain a precarious tyranny over the Americans
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for a while ; but the most shallow politicians must foresee what this would end in †. It would expose us to the certain attacks of all our European rivals ; and, when we found the necessity of courting the assistance of the Americans, we should deservedly find them the bitterest of our enemies. With the nations of Europe we contend for commerce, for glory, and some imaginary objects ; with those of America, the contest would be for the dearest rights, the very dignity of humanity. After the struggles of interest and prowess, a tolerable reconciliation may take place, but eternal enmity and hate always succeed those between a free people and their tyrants. From the spirit of freedom, which hath in all ages glowed in the bosoms of true Englishmen, and which hath brought to its present perfection our glorious constitution in defiance of every attempt to crush it ; we ought to know, that until we can extinguish this spirit in the breasts of the Americans, and eradicate from their very nature its first and noblest principles, self-preservation and free-will, that all our efforts to bow them down in subjection to our authority, must finally be ineffectual, and will recoil sooner or later, perhaps with ten-fold retribution upon ourselves. There are some politicians who think, that present expediency is a sufficient justification of any measures ; and who, from the ideas of re-imburfing ourselves for the charges of the last war, of supplying the present exigencies of the state, and securing our power over the American commerce, make no scruple to bid us draw the accursed sword, and enslave our children and our brethren. But, be it known to them, that though our very existence as a nation, depended on violating the express laws of God, it must not be done. And if their ignorance, which may be implied from the folly of their proposal, hath not yet made the discovery, let them be told that policy, national as well as individual, must have justice and the laws of God for its basis, or, 'tis the policy of villains, the policy of sots and fools. Can the legislature of Great Britain, I once more ask, govern the Americans on the true principles of freedom ? For the reasons I have already given, I believe it to be impossible †. As to their reimbursing us the sums of money spent on their account in the last war, they will do it, if we act wisely and justly, in the only way it is possible they should, and
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in the only way we expected of them when we undertook the war; that is, by a commerce beneficial to this kingdom. And by leaving them to their own independency, the charges of government may be greatly retrenched.

Thus far had I written, when the political tracts of a reverend Dean fell into my hands. They amply supply all the examples and explanations necessary to illustrate my principles, and shew to a demonstration the absolute necessity, in a political light, of relinquishing our claims to the sovereignty of America; to which the whole tenour of my letters point, and with which they are to conclude. But I am far from subscribing to this gentleman's doctrine as to the rights of sovereignty. If I could acknowledge the truth of that, I should very much doubt of the propriety of his proposed separation of America from Great Britain; for giving up one's right, cannot be thought a good rule for promoting one's interest. But in this case, as is very frequent, his common-sense hath been obliged to subdue his learning before he arrived at truth. While metaphysical refinements teach him to think, that Britain hath a right to govern America, the invincible force of truth extorts from him an acknowledgment that she must, if governed by true policy, relinquish it. 'Tis pity so able a writer had not discovered, that the Americans have a right to choose their own governors, and thence enforced the necessity of his proposed separation as a religious duty, no less than a measure of national policy. In so doing, he would have been consistent; there would then have been no obscurity; nor would his sentiments of right and expediency have been at variance; but his conclusion would naturally and evidently have flowed from his premises, supported by that trite, but true and most excellent maxim, that honesty is the best policy. But, perhaps, some may be of opinion, that the propriety of a separation is more strongly enforced, by its appearing to be the only result he could possibly arrive at through the medium of opinions that pointed the direct contrary way. The same opinions have, in all other writers, led them only to consider, by what means the unity of the whole British empire (taking in America) might be best preserved; how the supreme legislative power might be best supported, and enforce obedience to the utmost bounds of this vast dominion. Every project for this purpose

purpose (without a single exception) being embarrassed with a fundamental incompatibility, a radical error in supposing a right, where, in truth, there is none, hath been visionary, oppressive, sanguinary, and totally impracticable; so difficult it is to strive against the stream of nature and truth.

The Dean, with more good sense, with an extensive insight into the human heart, and the springs of commerce, and with the temper of a philosophic, uninterested looker-on, hath nobly abandoned the full persuasion of his own mind on the point of right; and, while he thinks we are entitled to govern, foresees and demonstrates the fatal consequences of attempting it. He accordingly advises us to separate in good humour, and trusts to our mutual interests for its producing, in fact, a real and sincere union; and this, he says, is "the only means of living in peace and harmony with them."

In the whole course of his work, wherever the dispute of right is not immediately in view, his reasonings flow spontaneously, and in spite of himself, from the feelings of right in his own heart. In page 153, he says, "For I am not for charging our colonies in particular with being finners above others, because, I believe, (and if I am wrong, let the histories of all colonies, whether antient or modern, from the days of Thucydides down to the present time, confute me if it can; I say, till that is done, I believe) that it is the nature of them all to aspire after independence, and to set up for themselves as soon as ever they find that they are able to subsist without being beholden to the mother country. And if our Americans have expressed themselves sooner on this head than others have done, or in a more direct and daring manner, this ought not to be imputed to any greater malignity, or ingratitude in them than in others, but to that bold, free constitution, which is the prerogative and boast of us all. We ourselves derive our origin from those very Saxons who inhabited the lower parts of Germany, &c." What can more fully prove the right of independence in colonies, too far removed to be governed on the principles of freedom by the mother country, than this universal, this uniform, invariable feeling of all mankind, in all ages, than that "it is the nature

" of them all to aspire after it." Shall we reject the unvarying testimony of nature speaking home to our hearts, and pin our faith upon the fine-spun, cobweb subtleties of our learned casuists and court-lawyers? or shall we, with more safety, rely upon the letter of an old musty charter, penned before this question was so much as thought of? Hath nature left herself so much without a witness to the truth in the human breast, that we must give ourselves wholly up to the direction of such blind guides as these? Fie! fie! If much learning hath not made us mad, it hath at least in this, and many similar cases, made us ignorant. It is to be lamented, that such a blaze of truth, as there is in the above observation, did not discover to the writer the fallaciousness of his original position of parliamentary right to govern the colonies; when all the while, it is the express, the sole purport of this work to prove, that parliament, in continuing to assert this right, cannot promote either the welfare of Great Britain or America.

NOTES, &c. to LETTER VI.

* I find it is one of the avowed principles of the Quebec Act, by the accounts of its ablest advocates, to check as much as possible, all population in the *upper* and *interior* country, at the back of the colonies. (See a pamphlet, entitled, *The Justice and Policy of the late Act of Parliament, for making more effectual Provision for the Government of the Province of Quebec*, asserted and proved, page 43; and an *Appeal to the Public*, stating and considering the *Objections to the Quebec Bill*, page 46.) At the same time that I honour all the *real* humanity, shewn in this act to the Canadians; I most heartily condemn the general *policy* of it, with regard to the other colonies. The evils complained of in the above-mentioned unsettled country, and made the lame pretence for enlarging so extravagantly the province of Quebec, by the annexation of the whole of it, are evils wholly occasioned by the inactivity and omissions of government for twelve years past; if it be true, that it is *the want of laws*, which introduces disorder into any society; and they are, with great injustice, charged upon the bordering colonies, as *legislative states*; (in which light, I find, they are to be considered by their enemies, whenever it may serve a turn to their disadvantage. See the appeal above-mentioned, page 50.) and, as an artful pretence for denying them

them leave of settlement, and that share in the peltry trade which they are most advantageously situated for enjoying. Provided Great Britain had no people to spare, for sending out colonies to occupy that desolate country, I can see no right she had to hinder the American states from so doing, except *by voluntary agreement between her and them*, unless she claim a power of counteracting God's first benediction to mankind.—“ Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it.” But notwithstanding it is the language of this act, that immense tracts of the earth shall remain desert and unpeopled, in order that the British parliament may maintain an usurped sovereignty over a multitude of populous nations, beyond one of the grand watery divisions of the globe; yet, in the end, it will prove to have no more virtue in it, towards stemming the overflowings of the colonies, than had the royal mandate of the wise Canutus, when, in order to confound his evil counsellors, he magisterially forbid the swelling tide of the ocean to approach his feet. A chain of feeble forts in a wilderness, or the pronouncing this wilderness to be part of the province of Quebec, will form a mighty barrier truly, against the swarms that will one day pour westward, from the too populous states upon the sea coast! I do not, however, deny, that even *this* mode of preventing anarchy, bloodshed, and cruelty for the present, is not better than none; but I think this is not the *right* way. To have consented, under our own guaranty, to a partition of this country amongst the bordering colonies, according to their respective situations, and as far as the just claims of the Indians would admit, would have been at once an act of justice and wise policy; or, if the enlargement of these respective colonies would be impolitic, on account of the future balance of power on that continent, and the general arbitration of Great Britain hereafter spoken of, then it might have been stipulated with them, that their several emigrants into this desert country, should be independent of them, and left to form a new state or new states, under laws to be given them for a free government on their first settlement, and suitable limitations of country, for the sake of preserving the future equilibrium and general peace. There cannot be a worse, or more narrow policy, than to give any check to American population; for, by those means, Britain will lose so many customers for her manufactures, and the colonies, by having their emigrations restrained, will be under a necessity of employing her hands in manufactures, instead of agriculture. We know the consequences.

† The insatuated people of this country, are not sparing of their ridicule and illiberal jests on the Bostonians, now the iron hand of power hath got them in it's grasp. No man of sense

ever doubted the *present* power of Great Britain, to crush any one opposing colony, or, possibly, to trample on the united necks of them all; but this arrogance and injustice she will assuredly repent. I wish it may not be in sackcloth and ashes;—I wish it may not be very soon.

‡ In framing the Quebec Act, it were much to have been desired, that none of the other colonies had been so much as thought of, it might then, perhaps, have breathed pure wisdom and benevolence; but, having interwoven in it that fatal policy, which is daily sowing the seeds of discord between Great Britain and America, I am inclined to think, it is justly censurable in a high degree; and that it is far less beneficial to the Canadians than it ought to be, although it may be very true, that they are at present incapable of receiving all the rights and privileges, and the full liberty of British subjects, yet that will be no justification of us, for intailing on their posterity so much servitude to an arbitrary power, as by this act is vested in the governor and council; all at the appointment of the crown *during pleasure*. To have had an assembly, wherein the people should have been represented, they had an undoubted right; to deny it them is tyrannical, and a mere evasion, to insinuate the impracticability of such a plan. Surely that power, which now totally deprives them of this essential to freedom, had been exerted more agreeable to the principles of justice and humanity; had it granted them but the rudest model of an assembly, containing within it the seeds of freedom, to have germinated and expanded with their prosperity, and their advancement in arts and knowledge! Those who assert the contrary, must be little acquainted with the origin and rise of almost all the free states that have flourished in the world, and must conceive the Canadians to be more stupid and barbarous than the Hottentots or Samoides. As to any intention of our ministers to promote in this act the interests of Popery, I think they may stand freely acquitted of them; and though I am of opinion, the religious part of it might be amended, yet I cannot but smile at the terrors that have been expressed on this occasion, as if his Holiness was at the very door of St. Paul's. No; the error of the legislature hath been in not seeing, that the most perfect freedom in America, is not only compatible with, but is now become necessary to, the prosperity of Great Britain; and it's crime, if a crime hath been committed, in seeking to support a tottering tyranny over the antient colonies, by erecting an arbitrary government in Quebec. For the sake of Britons on both sides of the Atlantic equally; for the sake of the Canadians, and for the sake of freedom's holy cause universally, I sincerely hope a little reflection on an end so abominable, and the still more abominable

means,

means, will dispose our legislators to retrieve, ere it be too late, such an unconstitutional and alarming step. The act of parliament of which we have been speaking, as well as two other memorable ones, passed since the writer first began to publish these letters separately in a news-paper, are thought by sober and reflecting men, to be melancholy records of human passions and infirmity; affording us most striking admonitions, that in national conduct, as well as in that of individuals, a mistaken principle of action, if not forsaken, or one false step, if unretrieved in time, may easily hurry us on to lengths of folly and wickedness, at which we should once have shuddered with horror, but can afterwards persist in to our utter destruction, regardless of all the miseries we at the same time bring upon others. Will rational and moral beings never learn, that without justice, 'tis impossible there should ever be wisdom in the councils of a nation? or can statesmen believe it will obtain their acquittal at the last tribunal, to plead, that in their private capacity, "they did justice and remembered mercy," though in their public stations, they violated these sacred regards; and through a false notion of serving and aggrandizing their country, they endeavoured to establish tyranny, and to entail on millions and millions, the deadliest curse that can imbitter life? In what light must a truly good and wise man behold a law, which is at once a yoke of bondage to one colony, and a scourge to the rest! Although greater miseries, previously endured, together with an ignorance in the value of, and the requisites to, freedom, may cause the poor Canadians, in their present circumstances, to receive it with joy and thankfulness; will that justify towards them, so ungenerous, so mean a policy?

L. E. T.

LETTER VII.

March 28, 1774

SINCE my last letter was sent to the printer, I have a second time looked into the publication therein referred to; and finding it likely to make a strong impression on its readers, as well as that there is the most striking inconsistency between its foundation and superstructure, I perceive that I cannot well pass it over without a regular, tho' concise examination of its third and fourth tract. These alone being immediately to the point, I shall confine my observations to them, without taking notice of the rest of the book.

In the beginning of the third tract, entitled, "A Letter from a Merchant in London to his Nephew in America," I am sorry to observe an appeal to *the spirit of our constitution* treated with ridicule, and an attempt made to substitute in place of this only genuine authority, *the letter of the statutes*, or even of Magna Charta itself; for these may all be imperfect, tho', as I have proved in a former letter, the spirit of the constitution cannot. A proceeding of this kind in an anonymous writer, or one of no credit, would, I confess, have given me an alarm of danger, and a suspicion of some deep design against the cause of truth: it certainly is very far from being a recommendation of the present work. May we not ask what is meant by removing the appeal from *the spirit of the constitution* to something which is called "the constitution itself," (p. 93, 94) and what that something is? It is not defined, nor can I understand what it is, unless it be a something which hath its sole existence in the varying and unsteady letter of the statute law, and therefore may be one thing to-day, and another to-morrow, as it was once tyranny and popery, and is at present freedom and true religion. If the author will be candid, he must acknowledge, that his distinction of "the constitution itself," from the spirit of the constitution, is unlogical, and a palpable contradiction. How
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can any thing be set in contradistinction to its essence? That "Magna Charta is the great foundation of English liberties, and the basis of the English constitution," I must positively deny. It is indeed a glorious member of the superstructure, but of itself would never have existed, had not the constitution already had a basis, and a firm one too. And as to this charter being the "foundation of English liberty," that was evidently otherwise; since it was an exertion of this very liberty that produced the charter; extorting it from an encroaching King, as a mere formal declaration of rights, already known to be the constitutional inheritance of every Englishman. Besides, I have elsewhere observed, that the original and only real foundations of liberty were, by the Almighty architect, laid together with the foundations of the world, when this right was ingrafted into the nature of man at his creation; and therefore it cannot be held, after the manner of an external property or possession, by charters and titles of human fabrick. We ought to be careful to preserve a gospel purity in our civil as in our religious constitution; for they are both founded on the word of God. If the religious be more express and clear, the civil is more antient, and no less divine, though only revealed to us by a general and fainter impress on the mind and heart of man. If the Dean will not admit the decrees of popes and councils as of equal authority with the word of God, he will not surely maintain, that a Magna Charta ought to come in competition with the spirit of a constitution, whose basis is *internal justice and inherent liberty*; a Magna Charta, notoriously known to have been extorted by the sword, and formed and ratified in the heat of a hostile contention. Nor will he, it is to be hoped, plead "the public statutes of the realm," (p. 145) when they militate against the spirit, or gospel purity of the constitution. And here I must remark, that his quotations of them, in order to prove the sovereignty of parliament, have not the weight of fair evidence in the trial now before the tribunal of the public; since they stand in the place, and in the nature of parties concerned. It is these very "public statutes of the realm," arrogating a right to govern and to tax the Americans which are called in question; therefore their testimony goes for nothing. If the cause be given in their favour, then it will
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be time enough for them to operate ; but if it goes against them, they must all be condemned as usurpations. We are now arguing what is just and right, and *ought to be* practised, not what *has been* practised by those who had the power in their hands ; not what they have been pleased, in their declarations, to *call* just and right. Although parliament should enact, that reason and truth should no longer be reason and truth, yet plain and honest people would be apt to call them reason and truth still, and to rely upon them with the same assurance they do at present. Hence it is, and ever will be, a truth as evident and as uncontrovertible as any law of nature can be, that “ an American,” notwithstanding the ingenuity of this author, and all that has been, or can be said to the contrary, has a right to insist, “ that according to the “ spirit of the constitution, he ought not to be taxed “ without his own consent, given either by himself or “ by a representative in parliament ;” I will not add, “ chosen by himself ;” because that, with regard to each individual, were we disposed to cavil, would lead us into useless and puerile disputations, (p. 93.) Every man of sense admits of the propriety of virtual representation, so far as it answers the ends and purposes of a real one, *but no farther*. I am sincerely sorry to observe a writer, so much entitled to respect as the Dean of Gloucester, employ his talents in an endeavour to mislead us into an opinion, that the Americans are virtually represented in the British parliament. It were a suitable and an innocent exercise of parts in a young disputant at college ; but will it bear to be gravely debated upon by a political writer ! Well might a noble Lord exclaim, “ for as to the “ distinction of a virtual representation, it is so absurd, “ as not to deserve an answer ; I therefore pass it over “ with contempt.” And if authorities are to have their weight, that I presume of this noble Lord, who presided with so much dignity and lustre, in the noblest court of equity in the world, will be allowed to preponderate against the Dean’s, at least in the judgment of every one who reads the tracts before us. If our author had duly weighed the arguments he has quoted from Judge Foster, in his 4th tract, (p. 170) he would have found, that they made nothing for such a virtual representation *as he contends for*. The Judge, it is plain, was not so irrational

as to think of the welfare of *two separate nations* (for so we may surely esteem Britain and America, think as we will of *empire*) inhabiting, with respect one to the other, "the ends of the earth," as being a fit object of consultation to a single national assembly; and that the deputies of one of these nations could be esteemed the representatives of the other. As to the imagination of Great Britain and America being *one empire*, these are only words that serve to blind, to amuse, and to confound inconsiderate reasoners. How often must it be repeated, that pride, ambition, and lust of dominion, are not, *on any pretence whatsoever*, to be gratified at the expence of nations; and that the *sole end* of civil government is to promote the good of the people? If an empire become too wide and unwieldy for this purpose, I do assert, that by the laws of nature, which are the laws of God, *it is no empire*, that is to say, not a *just* empire. It therefore must be divided, unless we admit that tyranny can be rightfully established, which God forbid! In our own case, I only want it to be done in form, as it is already done in fact, in which the Dean agrees with me; "for," says he, (p. 153) an undoubted fact it is, that from the "moment in which Canada came into the possession of the English, an end was put to the sovereignty of the mother country over her colonies *." I must now take notice of one argument, in favour of virtual representation, that our author seems to value himself upon, as of sufficient force to decide the general dispute with the Americans, and, at the same time, the much litigated question of the Middlesex election.—We find it in a note, (p. 172) "Surely the nation might have expelled Mr. Wilkes, or have struck his name out of the list of committee, had it been assembled, and had it thought proper so to do. What then should hinder the deputies of the nation from doing the same thing? and which ought to prevail in this case, the nation in general, or the county of Middlesex?" Now, this argument is evidently fallacious; for the House of Commons doth *not* answer to the *imagined committee* of Judge Foster, to which it is here compared; for that was a simple *democratical* council. Our national committee consists of *King and Lords*, as well as Commons; and therefore, according to the Dean's premises, that "the nation might have

“ expelled Mr. Wilkes,” it is the necessary conclusion; that nothing less than the national committee, namely, our compleat legislature of King, Lords, and Commons, had a right to strike his name out of the list. I entirely agree with this writer, that the member chosen and returned by certain individuals, is the representative of the whole nation; so that what is generally called a virtual, is, in fact, a real representation; but, at the same time, I must say it doth not appear to be very consistent with *the spirit of our constitution*, (if that expression will not give offence) that a Dunwich or an Old Sarum, containing half a dozen cottagers, should have the chusing of as many of these national representatives as a Norwich or a Bristol; nor that a Weymouth should return as great a number as the metropolis, whose citizens, according to our author, (p. 99) form “ a body as respectable as the greatest of our colonies with regard to *property*, and “ superior to many of them with respect to *numbers*.” Is not this an abuse that calls aloud for reformation? Can any thing be more notorious, than that a great majority of the national representatives are elected by a small number of indigent and corrupt men, who professedly make a trade of voting, and who gratify, in the very act, a sordid self-interest, in direct violation of the rights and interests of the nation collectively. These electors being *primarily* the representatives of the nation, may be called the *elective representatives*; and are answerable to the nation for the exercise of that great trust. If they pervert it from the end for which it was given them, and transfer it to bad men for their own selfish purposes, it is fit *they should be deprived of it*, in order to the establishing a more just and safe mode of electing the *legislative representatives* of the nation. But to return; I am of opinion, the Dean might as well have spared his reproaches of “ folly and absurdity” upon the positions of the Americans, concerning their want of an adequate representation, (p. 98) and have omitted his comparison of the state of the city of London, although it “ hath long enjoyed, “ before the colonies were ever thought of, the three- “ fold power of jurisdiction, legislation, and taxation *in certain cases*; for, if no man in his senses ever yet “ supposed, that the city of London either was, or could “ be exempted, by her charters, from parliamentary ju-
“ risdiction,

“ jurisdiction, or parliamentary taxes ;” it is full as evident, that no man in his senses can see any just similitude, with respect to parliamentary jurisdiction and taxation between *a metropolis*, the very central point of a nation, and *an entire kindred nation*, which hath arisen in the new world, at the distance of three thousand miles from the parent state, and beyond the vast Atlantic Ocean. *It is consistent with the security of the liberty and property of the citizens of London*, to be subject to parliamentary jurisdiction and taxation ; but this subjection *would not be consistent* with the security of the American nations. May not a man in his senses believe, that a kindred nation, or a colony, if you please, may be capable of managing its own concerns ; and that it is full as likely to do it faithfully as the legislators of its mother country ? May not a man in his senses believe, that such a state hath *a right* to appoint the guardians of its own liberties and properties, and to defend them against all invaders, even the legislators of its mother country, without involving himself in either “ folly or absurdity ?” Would the independency of any colony or kindred nation in America, necessarily create any such confusion, any such inconsistency in the government of Great Britain, as would follow from the independency of, and a separate supreme legislation in, the capital city ?

NOTE, &c. to LETTER VII.

* As justice says it *ought* to be so ; good sense will inform us that it *must* be so ; notwithstanding the profound policy of the Quebec act.

LETTER VIII.

April 8, 1774.

WHEN our reverend author is not in a jeering humour, he will acknowledge that it is, in reality, "unreasonable, unjust, and cruel," to tax an unrepresented people (for I deny that America is represented at Westminster) against their own consent. (P. 100.) But "strange, exclaims the Dean, that you did not discover these bad things before! Strange, that tho' the British parliament has been, from the beginning, thus *unreasonable*, thus *unjust* and *cruel* towards you, by levying taxes on many commodities, outwards and inwards; nay, by laying an internal tax, the post-tax, for example, on the whole British empire in America; and, what is still worse, by making laws to affect your property, your paper currency, and even to take away life itself, if you offended against them: strange and unaccountable, I say, that after you had suffered this so long, you should not have been able to have discovered that you were without representatives in the British parliament, *of your own electing*, till this enlightening tax upon paper opened your eyes! And what a pity is it, that you have been slaves for so many generations, and yet did not know that you were slaves until now." Now, strange and unaccountable as this may appear to the Dean, it has been by means of the very same kind precisely that our eyes have been successively opened to see the just rights of the people, the due limits of authority in their rulers, in every particular in which they are now legally ascertained. A rude and infant nation of husbandmen, having no pressing occasion, is not very logical or critically learned in the law, and all its remote consequences. It must move progressively towards the acquisition of knowledge as well as strength. This knowledge will always be first confined to reflecting individuals, before it will spread at large amongst the people; and
many

many such individuals amongst the Americans, by the Dean's own account, (p. 145, 146) have had " their eyes " open " these hundred years and upwards. The bulk of a nation must be made to *feel*, before they reason with tolerable accuracy, or lay much stress upon their governors keeping strictly within the pale of just and legal authority. Even self-evident truths are not discerned, until the attention of mankind is called upon by necessity, or some other powerful cause, to examine the subject in which they exist. The divine right of Kings, and their absolute power too, might have remained in the creeds of all nations to this day, had not a too liberal exercise of these powers taught them to reason by making them *feel*. No man in any country, ever thought of scrupulously defining the proper powers of taxation, while he possessed nothing worth taxing; nor of limiting the exercise of such powers, so long as the contributions required were trifling to him, the occasions of raising them apparent to all men, and the application of them known to, and approved by, every individual. It is, when a state begins to rise into some degree of political consequence, and the operations of its government are become too secret and complex to be penetrated by the vulgar eye, and at the same time grow expensive to the people, that they, not knowing what is going forward, and suspicious of some ill towards themselves, begin to investigate the legal powers of taxing, and how far they ought to be exercised; nor shall we exceed the truth, if we add, that all their jealousy and vigilance have been little enough, in the happiest age and nation, for guarding against the king-craft and tyranny of their rulers. While too insignificant to become the objects, or the tools of ambition, they remain in ignorance; it is the alarm of chains, and the dislike of burthens, that " enlighten them and open " their eyes." After what has been said, I should hope it was quite unnecessary to refute the feeble arguments we find in p. 101, 102, 103, drawn from the freedom which an American now is permitted to enjoy, of voting for a member of the British parliament. We must remember, however, that he cannot do this without being a *British* freeholder, or holding some property which makes him at least a *British* subject; and it is therefore *as a Briton*, not

as an *American*, he is represented. But to trace this rope of sand any farther, would really be to mock my readers; and I have already sufficiently replied to all such sorry subtleties. If the true and proper relation, in which this country stands with regard to the colonies, hath not, in all particulars, been accurately defined by mutual agreement and declaratory laws; but there are to be found some little inconsistencies, as there needs must be in such a connection so long as Great Britain, through a love of rule, finds means to evade a fair discussion of *the question of right*; which, I pray, is the course that a wise and good man ought to pursue, in order to reconcile all contradictions, and to obtain a just idea of what is fit to be done for the remedying these inconveniences? Ought not the welfare of the whole people, without any partiality for countries, to out-weigh, in his mind, every other consideration? Must it not be his polar star, whenever he ventures upon the dark and deceitful sea of casuistry? Will he, for a moment, believe in the truth of any position or maxim, how antient, how specious soever, that is evidently incompatible with this object? Surely he will not lose sight of the true, the only ends of government, and labour to harden the heart and strengthen the hands of tyranny! Nor will he, surely, disregard the plain and obvious dictates of reason and nature, and, in defence of a bad cause, stoop and strain to catch at every little flaw and defect in forms and precedents! But one false step in reasoning, frequently misleads a good man into opinions and disputations prejudicial to truth. However, when the good of the public shall ultimately appear to be the end he aims at, we must make charitable allowances for his mistakes. Such allowances I am disposed to make to the author of the tract; but yet as a well-wisher, and in perfect good humour, I must needs say he has indulged too freely a spirit, I will not say a talent, of ridicule; he is too supercilious even to his nephew, and is apt to sneer somewhat out of season, and when a satirical opponent might very easily retort it upon him with double force. Neither doth he appear to me quite so cool, dispassionate and impartial, as becomes a man who takes upon him to elucidate a disputed question on which depends the welfare, perhaps the existence of nations,

nations. He must have been a poor casuist, indeed, not to have obtained a victory over an antagonist of his own making : but we need not quarrel with him for beating him, since he shewed him so much mercy and good manners. But doth it not rather savour of dissingenuousness, to put the maimed and mutilated arguments of the Americans into the mouth of a wrongheaded ignorant boy ? Had it not been more to the advantage of his knowledge and eloquence, to have impressed conviction upon the mind of an experienced and able man, one who was well acquainted with the history, the laws, and the constitution of both Great Britain and the colonies ? but in that case, decency would have confined him to argument, instead of sneer and ridicule, and to a carriage suited to an equal, instead of that supercilious superiority assumed over the booby nephew ; and this would have deprived his letter of its principal force and spirit. “ But let that pass,” and let us proceed to what is more to the purpose.

Our author proves, very satisfactorily, that the cause of contention between us and the colonies, is no recent affair—not the factious contrivance of a Lord C——m, or a Lord C——n, as the historians of the day would have it, but existed in no small force so early in the last century as 1670, (p. 145) and in 1696, (p. 146) gave occasion to a very remarkable act, for the very purpose chiefly of asserting the sovereignty of parliament. Acts of parliament do not take place on such occasions until the mischief to be remedied is already at some degree of ripeness ; and accordingly it appears, that, the colonies had, for a considerable time, previous to 1696, shewn a disposition to doubt, to dispute, and in some sort to oppose the authority of the English parliament. Their eyes began to be open, and nature made them feel the inherent rights as men, long before they could define them. On the other hand, false definitions of law and right, have as long suppressed the feelings of equity in the minds of those possessed of the power. Let us make true definitions, and consult our true feelings, and we shall then no longer doubt of the right of independence in the Americans ; I say true feelings, because, without we are—circumspect, we are continually acquiring false ones, as well as false opinions ; and the latter have a wonderful
power

power in generating the former. Witness the daily and perpetual severities we see practised towards children, to the injury both of body and mind, by injudicious parents, who yet want neither humanity nor tenderness, and who act upon principle. A false system begetting false feelings, while they are injuring and punishing their children, they think they are serving them and consulting their true happiness; and they consequently feel self-approbation for a conduct that ought to inspire horror and self-reproof. Now, with regard to our American children and kindred, let us divest ourselves of every interest, of every passion, of every prejudice; let us pluck from our hearts that deep-rooted love of rule, and for a moment put ourselves in their places; and then, deliberately and solemnly laying our hand upon our heart, remembering that we are christians, and answerable at the awful tribunal of the Deity for our very thoughts; let us ask ourselves these plain questions: is not the end of government to the Americans the same as to all other people, that is to say, the welfare and happiness of the society? Can there be welfare and happiness without freedom? Can freedom exist under a taxation, at the discretion of the legislature of another, and that a distant, a luxurious, a necessitous country? Is it agreeable to common-sense to imagine, that an American representation in the British parliament could answer the true ends of representation to the people of that country? or, is it possible, according to any plan which human wisdom hath yet conceived, that the parliament of Great Britain should govern the many and multiplying nations of America on the true principles of freedom, or without a certainty of sinking herself under the weight of empire? And is it fit that, on the authority of a few logical distinctions, (admitting they were just, which, by the way, they are not) and for the sake of proudly maintaining an absolute, a deceased claim to an empty sovereignty, (for so it is confessed to be, by its advocate the Dean) that we should forget all these considerations, all the ties of consanguinity and affection, all the feelings of humanity, and the divine lessons of our holy religion, and enforce the obedience of the Americans to an odious tyranny by fire and sword?

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It is matter of the greatest astonishment to me, that a writer so learned, and so clear-sighted as the Dean, should have so far over-looked all arguments of this nature, as to have left himself without a just, a moral reason, as well as a political one, for his proposed separation. As to the matter of fact, concerning the possibility of keeping the sovereignty in our hands, he and I are well agreed, as I have already shewn in my quotation from p. 153: nay, we both agree, that we have it not to keep, that it is already gone, never to be recovered but by conquest, never more to be held but with greater armies, and at a greater expence, than ever this country supported in any war. I have also, in a former letter, quoted, what he says in the same page, (153) in order to shew, that it hath ever been the nature of all colonies, in all ages, to aspire after independence, and made my reflections thereupon, so that we may now hasten to the consideration of his five proposals, and to the conclusion of the task we have assigned ourselves. If I have trespassed upon the reader, by a repetition of the same arguments in different places, I would observe, that the few plain and clear arguments, on which this question depends, need to be repeated again and again, and never to be lost sight of; for the enemies of liberty, like the disingenuous foes of religion, are a sort of people, who, conscious that they cannot convince, and determined to wrangle, do not scruple to advance the same stale arguments that have been a thousand and a thousand times refuted before; and if not refuted again, as often as they have the shamelessness to revive them, they insult their adversaries with affected shouts of victory and triumph.

But my manner of treating the subject may, nevertheless, need many apologies. I shall, however, only plead, that these letters have been written as leisure would permit, and sent away to the printer, without reserved copies to refer to: besides which, it may be proper to add, that at the time I am writing this eighth, no more than the two first have made their appearance in the paper. As for the presumption of entering on a subject, without abilities equal to the attempt, I shall only offer, in my defence, that I have been prompted to it through a warm, a passionate love of liberty, and a sincere desire of

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promoting its cause. Whatever may be my success, I shall never want the pleasing reflection of having done my duty conscientiously, as a member of society, although in a subordinate degree to greater workmen : and, I hope, it is not uncharitable to think, that if every writer would resign his pen to the same guidance, we should all be agreed very soon, as nearly as would be requisite, and that mankind would then reap such benefits from political disquisitions, as I fear are not likely to take place, while controversy is carried upon other principles.

LET.

LETTER IX.

April 9, 1774.

WE come now to the consideration of our author's final sentiments, and in p. 156, we find him thus expressing himself:—' Enough surely has been said on this subject, and the upshot of the whole matter is plainly this:—that even the arbitrary and despotic governments of France and Spain (arbitrary, I say, both in temporals and spirituals) maintain their authority over their American colonies but very imperfectly, inas-much as they cannot restrain them from breaking through those rules and regulations of exclusive trade, for the sake of which all colonies seemed to have been originally founded. What then shall we say in regard to such colonies as are the offspring of a free constitution? And after what manner, and according to what rule, are our own in particular to be governed, without using any force or compulsion, or pursuing any measure repugnant to their own ideas of civil or religious liberty? In short, and to sum up all in one word, how shall we be able to render these colonies more subservient to the interests, and more obedient to the laws and government of the mother country, than they voluntarily chuse to be? After having pondered and revolved the affair over and over, I confess there seems to me to be but the five following proposals which can possibly be made, viz.

' First, To suffer things to go on for a while as they have lately done, in hopes that some favourable opportunity may offer for recovering the jurisdiction of the British legislature over her colonies, and for maintaining the authority of the mother country; or, if these temporizing measures should be found to strengthen and confirm the evil instead of removing it, then,

' Secondly, To attempt to persuade the colonies to send over a certain number of deputies, or representatives, to sit and vote in the British parliament, in order

‘ to incorporate America and Great Britain into one
 ‘ common empire; or, if this proposal should be found
 ‘ impracticable, whether on account of the difficulties
 ‘ attending it on this side the Atlantic, or because that
 ‘ the Americans themselves would not concur in such a
 ‘ measure; then,

‘ Thirdly, To declare open war against them as re-
 ‘ bels and revolters; and after having made a perfect
 ‘ conquest of the country, then to govern it by military
 ‘ force and despotic sway; or, if this scheme should be
 ‘ judged (as it ought to be) the most destructive, and the
 ‘ least eligible of any; then,

‘ Fourthly, To propose to consent that America shall
 ‘ become the general seat of empire, and that Great Bri-
 ‘ tain and Ireland should be governed by viceroys sent
 ‘ over from the court residencies either at Philadelphia or
 ‘ New-York, or at some other American imperial city;
 ‘ or, if this plan of accommodation should be ill-di-
 ‘ gested by home-born Englishmen, who, I will ven-
 ‘ ture to affirm, would never submit to such an indig-
 ‘ nity; then,

‘ Fifthly, To propose to separate entirely from the co-
 ‘ lonies, by declaring them to be a free and independent
 ‘ people, over whom we lay no claim, and then by offer-
 ‘ ing to guarantee this freedom and independence against
 ‘ all foreign invaders whomsoever.

‘ Now, these being all the plans which, in the nature
 ‘ of things, seem capable of being proposed, let us exa-
 ‘ mine each of them in their order.’

I shall not need myself to accompany the Dean throughout this examination, in order to point out the fatal policy of attempting, and total impracticability of executing, any one of the four first of these schemes, since he has done it so effectually himself as to need no assistance. But though I agree with him in the result, that they are all both impolitic and impracticable, yet I differ widely from him in several arguments introduced in the discussion, and no less in the fundamental principles he frequently argues from. When he talks of the mother country governing ‘ in the manner she ought to do;’ (p. 160) and according to the original terms of the constitution, I presume we are to understand the constitution to be some one individual contract between the mother country

country and her race of colonies, some certain deed signed and sealed between them and her in due form. Is this the same constitution he told us of in p. 94, of which Magna Charta was the basis? But if terms or conditions be the marks of our constitution, it may indeed be a colony charter, a marriage act, a stamp act, or, in short, any act of Parliament, or of the crown either, so that it will be a matter of very little consequence, whether it have Magna Charta for its basis, or any basis at all, besides that of the statute in being. Since he lays so much stress on those original terms, by which the colonies are bound to suffer their respectable mother to govern as he thinks 'she ought to do', let us warn him not to rely too much upon analogical reasoning, since it is apt to prove too much. If he means that Great Britain ought to be obeyed by her colonies, because she is their mother, because she produced them, and gave them their law, and that her contracts with them, when in their infancy, ought to bind them for ever, he would do well to remember, that no civil contract, between a parent and an infant child, affecting the future property of that child, can possibly have any validity, because of the child's being, at the time, in the power of the parent; because it dares not object to it, it cannot reject any terms she may please to dictate. I need not tell our author, that in the eye of the law, and agreeable to the spirit of the constitution, such a contract is esteemed no better than a fraud, or an act of the grossest tyranny.

Before I take my final leave of the four first of our author's proposals, I must make two observations upon what appears on the face of them. In the first place, let me request the reader to mark attentively the obvious sentiment, the unambiguous language of the second proposal. When the Dean is off his guard, and when the mistaken principles he adopted, respecting the sovereignty of parliament over America, are for a moment out of sight, see how naturally, how unavoidably he allows all I contend for!—Here he admits, by direct and unavoidable implication, that parliament hath not the rights of sovereignty over America; he admits, that America is not a part of the British empire, or he could not possibly propose 'to attempt to persuade the colonies to send representatives to sit in the British parliament, in order to incorporate America and Great Britain into one common empire.'

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In the next place, I want to know, when, under the idea of an union, he has proposed to consent, that the seat of empire be transferred from Great Britain to America, why 'every home-born Englishman' should consider it as 'such an indignity.'—The answer is plain, because he would become a slave; and while America shall be governed at Westminster, the Americans will be slaves. If our dignity consist in governing other nations against their wills, it is a dignity we ought to be ashamed of; but if it be the genuine offspring, and the associate of our liberty and independence, in God's name let our American kindred enjoy it as well as ourselves.

We now come to the consideration of the Dean's fifth and last proposal of an amicable and friendly separation, concerning which he very justly demands, p. 195, 'and, in fact, what is all this but the natural, and even the necessary corollary to be deduced from each of the former reasons and observations? For, if we neither can govern the Americans, nor be governed by them; if we can neither unite with them, nor ought to subdue them, what remains, but to part with them on as friendly terms as we can?' This proposal, and the invincible arguments in its support, make ample amends for all the errors in the foregoing parts of his work. He shews himself to be master of this part of his subject; and it cannot be too much recommended to those whom I address in these letters, and to the people in general, to make themselves well acquainted with what he advances. His much superior knowledge of our American commerce, places the good policy of a separation from America in a much stronger point of light than it was in my power to have done: but I flatter myself, I have sufficiently proved, that we could not have kept that country in subjection without being tyrants. When justice and policy both point the same way, nothing but determined wickedness, or a wilful blindness can occasion us to take a wrong course. With the favour of the reader, I must here repeat one of the first observations I made on the Dean's work, as it strikes me afresh with redoubled force every time I consider it, and that is, that the proposed declaration of the independence of America, is a conclusion in direct opposition to his original premises. In his abstract reason-

ings

ings on government, and the relation of colonies to the parent state, he falls—the common fate of genius on slippery abstract ground, into an error in fundamentals, laying it down as a principle, that ‘parliament hath the rights of sovereignty over America;’ and consequently, that ‘America is actually a part of the British empire.’ These are the principles he sets out upon; but behold the result of all his subtle, all his laboured reasonings!—At the end of a second work upon the subject, and after exhausting the chaotic treasuries of sophistry for arguments in support of these principles, he concludes with a proposal to the legislature, to declare that parliament doth not claim these rights. Nay, but a minute before, and, as I have observed, when off his guard, he acknowledges that parliament hath not these rights, and even proposes ‘to attempt to persuade the colonies to agree to an union.’ There is something too irreconcilable in the idea, as before remarked, of giving up one’s rights, in order to promote one’s interest; but false principles will ever produce fallacious reasonings. How can we possibly say more for an amicable separation from America, than that the absolute necessity of it took, as it were by storm, a mind naturally strong and vigorous, and fortified with all the powers of art against the attack! The Dean, in journeying to the great, the imperial city of truth, whose eternal foundations occupy a rock that overlooks the country around, unfortunately sets off in a mist of prejudice. Sometimes he takes a direct contrary course; sometimes intervals of a clearer light keep him steady in the right road; but then again, as the density of the mist either totally obstructs his view, or discovers truth in faint glimmerings, he frequently deviates into bye paths and hollow ways, to the danger of being lost, even when near his journey’s end. At last, however, the sun of conviction bursts forth in meridian blaze, the mist is gone, and he arrives at the eternal city. But after having thus proposed a separation, ‘as the only means of living in peace and harmony with the colonies:’ and, after having given reasons for it, in opposition to which, I must needs think no man can remain an infidel, who is not at the same time an idiot; our author is, in my opinion, far more faithless, far more hopeless, than at this time there seems cause to be with regard

regard to the execution of his plan. His plan I call it, since he is, for aught I know to the contrary, the first who hath taken the pains to propose it publicly, and to explain its advantages, although it has been for some time past a common sentiment amongst discerning and liberal-minded men, and to propose it was the first motive to the writing, and the main drift of these letters. It has been more particularly a common sentiment (for indeed invention itself cannot hit on any other plausible expedient) ever since the late noble and indignant conduct* of the Americans in defence of their almost-undermined liberty, as this affords a sufficient demonstration to all intelligent minds, in which the love of liberty and justice retained their influence, that the time is come, that they are determined to be independent of Great Britain, whether it be with her consent or not. 'I frankly acknowledge,' says our author, p. 212, 'I propose no *present* convenience or advantage to either administration or anti-administration; nay, I firmly believe, that no minister, as things are now circumstanced, will dare to do so much good to his country:' whereas I, on my part, firmly believe, that Lord North is the minister who dares to do this great good to his country. He took the helm in a storm, when no other minister was to be found who could guide it; and he has given us, throughout his administration, very ample proofs of his intrepidity. Are we not, at this moment, under a general consternation at what may be the consequences of his intrepidity? Shall he dare, in a single act that has no precedent, to shock this whole nation? Shall he dare to hurl a rash and misguided vengeance on the town of Boston, and bid a bold defiance to all America, and yet want courage to adopt a measure of the greatest wisdom and goodness; a measure which, to execute, he may esteem the glory of his life? The idea is too contradictory for a character so consistent as his. There are conjunctures in the affairs of kingdoms, when none but an intrepid statesman can stem a head-long torrent of popular zeal, or avert a gathering storm which threatens his authority. If the urgent necessity of the case shall not admit of temperate measures, but shall demand a daring act of temporary violence, such a statesman, if he be wise and virtuous also, will avail himself of the short-lived calm that succeeds

ceeds the conflict, and before the discontents of the people can break forth afresh with redoubled and irresistible impetuosity, he will effectually remove them, by removing their causes, and by giving them a security against future alarms. I hope that the late bill † will prove only a temporary violence, and that these moments, which are generally thought to be a fullen calm, foreboding some dreadful political convulsion, may be pregnant with more salutary measures and plans of peace ‡. The remembrance of it will, in a moment, be done away, when Great Britain shall once have done justice to the Americans, by an open declaration of their independence, and by offering them her friendship. Our mutual jealousies will be buried in oblivion, and, as the Dean foretels, the Americans will then consider us as 'their protectors, mediators, benefactors.'

NOTES, &c. to LETTER IX.

- The Boston Port Bill.

† Notwithstanding the act for the better regulating the government of the Massachusetts Bay, and notwithstanding the Quebec act, I will not yet part with my hope, that the eyes of the legislature will soon be opened; and that these acts, as well as the other, will only prove temporary acts of violence. They have all been passed before the minds of the ministers have had time to cool.

‡ I would not have the reader imagine, I mean to justify every tarring and feathering rioter at Boston, and all disorderly proceedings in America indiscriminately. Some of the people, I doubt not, may have been to blame; for the commonalty of that country must have had a portion of wisdom and patience, which hath not at any time before been found in the world, had all their expressions of resentment for ill usage, been confined within the bounds of moderation. When governors become tyrants, shall we wonder, that an injured and insulted people become riotous and unruly! Have ambitious and encroaching rulers ever yet thought of rendering *satisfaction*, of making *reparation*, for the cruellest injuries they have so constantly committed; and have they not always thought themselves wonderfully gracious and condescending, when they have merely *ceased to oppress*? but if a free people, finding their humble petitions, and most dutiful remonstrances scattered to the winds with contempt, being stung with a sense of accumulated wrongs, and feeling an

indignation at being treated like slaves and villains, do but assault the meanest miscreant in the train of power; 'tis rebellions! felony! treason!—Gaols and gibbets, ball and bayonet, must here be the correctives. Is this human polity! Are these the proceedings of men, of fellow-creatures, of fellow-christians? When merely *ceasing to oppress*, is all the reparation required for a long train of injuries and insults; shall authority, with whom wisdom ought ever to reside, become deaf to that voice which called her into being, and think it meritorious to persist in doing wrong?

So universally have I heard the Bostonians condemned for destroying the *tea*, and the action pronounced illegal and rebellious, that I have taken some pains to examine all the particulars of that affair. Now, to my agreeable disappointment, and to the best of my judgment, instead of an act of rebellion, I find it one reflecting honour, and stamping the character of good subjects, on those who performed it; instead of being illegal, it appears to me to be warranted by the law of nature, the great original of all human laws, when just. Those who would wish to think justly, and to speak honestly of this matter, will do well to examine for themselves. When they shall have so done, with care and candour, and admitting on my part, for the sake of taking no advantage in the argument, the Bostonian character to be as black as malignantly represented, I should be glad to propose to them this plain question: 'What was possible for the most wise and virtuous persons on earth, in the place of the Bostonians, to have done, in order to have performed their duty to the utmost, towards God and their country?'—To have shewn a passive obedience to an unjust act of parliament, in a case of such moment, and of so critical a nature, would have been treason to their country, and therefore not acceptable, I imagine, to God. I have introduced in various conversations, with sensible men, the same question I here propose, but never yet, I can aver with the strictest veracity, have I met with a solution of it, which did not confirm me in an opinion, that as wise and virtuous men, as good citizens, and true patriots, *they could not possibly have acted otherwise than as they did*. They had only this one alternative; they were driven to this dilemma by their magistrates, *either to suffer an insidious attempt against their sacred rights and liberties to take effect, or to destroy the hated instrument*. Having had no other choice, they must necessarily have either *done this, or suffered that*. Which ought to have been chosen by every brave and honest man, I leave the reader to determine. 'Tis visionary, even to childishness, to say, they might have permitted the tea to have been landed, and yet have defeated the tax, by unanimously refusing to have purchased it. The conductors

doctors of that noble action must have been patriots indeed, and most wonderfully wise, to have left their country, by going this way to work, at the discretion and mercy of the most ignorant and vicious of its inhabitants, to have relied upon the prudence and self-denial of every tea-drinker in America! Besides that the wisdom of each well-meaning individual was not to be depended on for foreseeing all the ill consequences of purchasing a pound of tea, nor their resolution in preventing them; I fear there might have been some traitors to the public cause, some tools of government or the India Company, or some suspected persons at least, in whom to have confided, for not setting the example, and using all their cunning to seduce others, would not have argued any extraordinary degree of prudence. What teacher of morals or politics, ever was lunatic enough to build all his hopes of serving his country, on an expectation of bringing *every individual* of it to be of one mind, and as unanimously to act up to the same rigid principle of virtue? and which of us would care to risk the safety of the city of London, from some dreadful calamity, on a confidence that every female, from the fine lady to the washerwoman, every man, from the minister of state down to the blackguard, might be prevailed upon totally to abstain from the use of tea, porter, or gin, *except the temptation was removed out of their way.*

To all my readers, except those unhappy ones, who have learned the fatal art of occasionally closing the mental eye, so as to admit just so much, and no more of the light of truth as their passions and prejudices will bear; I must needs think, it would be reflecting upon their understandings and their ingenuousness, to attempt any farther proof of my proposition, that the Bostonians did what was strictly consonant to right and justice in destroying the tea; but, in order to open the self-closed, winking eyes of the prejudiced, I will propose one more comparison, which, I apprehend, will be admitted as a fair one, since it is agreed on all hands, except by the calm advancers of direct falsehoods and lies, and the bold deniers of demonstration, that with regard to taxation, the colonists, as legitimate shoots from a parent stock of freedom, have at least an equal right to be their own tax-masters as the people of Ireland, which was a conquered, and every one knows, a very rebellious kingdom for many ages. Let then the reader only substitute Ireland and Dublin, for Massachusetts's Bay and Boston, and try the cause over again in his own mind. If he pleases, we will suppose, that instead of a duty on tea, we should attempt to touch the pockets of the Irish, by a duty on certain stamped papers, being publications of gross immoralities and blasphemies, tending to debauch the minds of the people, and fit them for slavery; and that an association of honest citizens of

Dublin, more mindful of their duty to God and their country, than of obedience to an ordinance they held to be subversive of their liberties, should find this precious cargo, precisely in a similar situation with the tea at Boston; that the Lord Mayor, the magistrates, and revenue myrmidons, like the Boston governor and officers of customs, should all absolutely refuse their permission and clearances for its departure from the port, and the ship should be well imprisoned by surrounding batteries; then, what is to be done? what course is to be pursued? Shall those, who ought to be the guides and guardians of the city, admit these pernicious compositions within their walls; patiently behold them displayed in the shops, hawked about the streets, and dispersed throughout the country, with every art of invitation to those inclined to purchase? Is the city to be deluged with these impieties, and its manners, morals, and liberties undermined, rather than *an united company of merchants trading in mischief* should lose their property? a property not only detrimental in itself, but in this case made a venture, with the direct intention of betraying a brave and generous nation into obedience to a despotic ordinance, containing in it the seeds of a more complete tyranny, and used as the most tempting bait to lure the silly multitude into the political mousetrap; and therefore, on the principles of self-preservation, and agreeable to the spirit of the law of nature and nations, subject to be destroyed, *if not removed upon fair warning*. Are the city guardians, I say, to observe all this, and content themselves all the while with a patriotic resolve, not to buy or to read a single paper, and with preaching to the unlistening people to follow their example? If this, in the enlightened and virtuous city of Dublin, would be an experiment, that even a driveller would hardly dream of making; how much less safe would it have been for the American patriots to have hazarded their all, on the universal good sense, on the piety and public spirit of the people, in the *stupid, the hypocritical, the impious, the ungrateful, and rebellious* town of Boston! What then, I once more ask, ought the patriots of Dublin or of Boston to have done? What! but with indignation to have cast the hated instrument of tyranny into the sea! whither its proprietors deserved also to have followed it headlong. Is it for this wise, brave, and generous action, that not only the actors of it, but the whole people of Boston, are now smarting under the heaviest vengeance of Great Britain! of a people who have hitherto justly prided themselves in being the undaunted resisters of tyrants! Fie, boasters, fie! Britannia blushes for your degeneracy; she disowns ye for her sons. When a pawnbroker knowingly puts arms into the hands of a highwayman or ruffian, does any law insure to him payment
for

for the same, at the hands of any one who, being assaulted, seized and destroyed them? Are not all deadly weapons, all snares, traps, and poisons, made use of in violation to the laws of civil society, for injuring any man in life, limb, or property, a *lawful spoil* to the injured party? When the miscreant, pick-pocket Jew, in the service of iniquity, was once driving a trade amongst the Westminster school-boys, with a parcel of TEA, out of the *green cannister* of the celebrated Mrs. Phillips, who, that had a spark of virtuous indignation, but applauded the *illegal proceedings* of the spirited master, when, disregarding the *laws of property*, he threw into the fire all of this tea he could lay his hands on; and, as little considering the penalties for an assault, horfed the vile factor, and scourged him to the quick?

I must therefore repeat, that the destroyers of the tea at Boston were, in my opinion, a band of virtuous patriots, whose names, when once made public, will doubtless be held in eternal veneration by their countrymen; and that the glorious *illegality* (if every statute, *whether just or unjust*, be properly comprehended in the word law) they atchieved, was an act of absolute moral and political *necessity*, and therefore exempt from even good laws; of singular wisdom, of strict justice, and remarkable temper and forbearance, considering their provocations, since it was done in *self-defence*, with the greatest good order and decency, and unaccompanied with incivility to any one, or the smallest damage to any thing in the ships besides the treacherous tea. I must likewise repeat, that this tea, for the reasons I have given, and agreeable to the spirit of the law of nature and nations, was justly forfeited to the injured Americans; and that the East India Company are not entitled to any satisfaction or payment for the same.

L E T.

LETTER X. and Last.

April 14, 1774.

NOTHING now remains to be spoken of but the act of parliament necessary to that separation, proposed by the reverend author of the tracts, and seconded in these letters; and that general treaty between Great Britain and the states of America, which will be the necessary, and doubtless the immediate consequence of it. When parliament shall have duly weighed this great, this important matter,—the greatest by far that ever came before any national council whatever!—with the attention it merits, and in the temper recommended in my first letter, we may hope to see a *nemine contradicente* act, whose preamble shall run in some such form as the following, viz. ‘Whereas, at the time of the original planting and settling of colonies on the continent of North America by the people and the crown of these kingdoms; and afterwards, during the infancy of the said colonies, the future ill consequences of their submission to, and acquiescence under the authority of parliament were not, by reason of their then infant and dependent state, and the general inexperience in matters of that kind, either foreseen or duly attended to; and whereas, through the growing of these once small and helpless colonies to maturity, and their becoming populous, opulent, and respectable states, having each within itself the natural rights and proper powers of legislation, the exercise of parliamentary authority hath been found to clash in the most essential points with their respective internal legislatures, and hath tended, for a considerable time past, but more particularly of late years, to create dissatisfactions between the said internal legislatures and parliament, and between the people of the said colonies and the people of these kingdoms; and whereas these matters having been taken into consideration, and it appearing upon the principles of natural justice, and agreeable to the established maxims of civil government,

' ment, that it is inconsistent with the welfare of the
 ' people of the said colonies or states, and prejudicial to
 ' their natural inherent rights as men, to be governed by
 ' the parliament of Great Britain, or any other power so-
 ' reign to themselves respectively : be it therefore enacted,
 ' &c.' In the enumeration of their names, none of them
 (fifteen, I think, lying between the Gulph of St. Law-
 rence and the mouth of the Mississippi) will, I hope, be
 omitted, but those obtained partly by war and treaty in-
 serted as well as the rest; and that in the clause, it shall
 be fully expressed, that ' they are all held and declared
 ' to be free and independent states, each to be subject to
 ' such law and government only as now subsists, or shall
 ' hereafter be enacted and constituted within itself by its
 ' own proper legislature; and that of each and every of
 ' the said independent states, his Majesty is, and shall be
 ' held to be the sovereign head, in like manner as he is of
 ' the legislature of Great Britain.'—In another clause, I
 could wish it might likewise be expressed, that ' the par-
 ' liament of Great Britain doth farther declare itself to be
 ' the guardian and protector of the whole, and of every
 ' of the said states or colonies, collectively and individu-
 ' ally, against every foreign power whatsoever, as well as
 ' the guarantee of the independence of the said several co-
 ' lonies or states, one of another respectively and reci-
 ' procally, as well also of the rights and independencies
 ' of the several tribes or nations of Indians in amity with,
 ' or under the protection of the crown of these kingdoms,
 ' until these points shall be more particularly adjusted by
 ' treaty.' Another clause would probably provide, that
 ' commissioners, on the part of the parliament of Great
 ' Britain, shall be empowered to enter into treaty with
 ' deputies of the legislatures of each of the said colonies
 ' or states, in order that a firm, brotherly, and perpetual
 ' league may be concluded between Great Britain and
 ' them for their mutual commercial benefit, and their
 ' joint security against all other kingdoms and states, as
 ' well as for the preservation of that warm affection and
 ' harmony which ought ever to subsist between a mother-
 ' country and her offspring, or kindred states, equally
 ' acknowledging one perfect constitution, and one per-
 ' fect religion, as their rule of life in temporals and in
 ' spirituals.'—The commissioners will be nominated of
 course.

course. Other declarations and provisions may be contained in this act, as parliament shall see good; but we should hope, as an indispensable requisite towards the security of the general liberties, that it be enacted, that ‘ no
 ‘ part of the revenue of any one of the said American
 ‘ states shall, by his Majesty, his viceroy, or ministers,
 ‘ be removed out of, or received into, any other of the
 ‘ said states, or into Great Britain for his Majesty’s use;
 ‘ and that in like manner, no part of the revenue of these
 ‘ kingdoms shall be remitted to America on that account;
 ‘ but that the revenue of Great Britain, and of each respective state in America, shall be wholly and solely applied to defray the expences of government, and maintain the regal dignity in that country in which it shall be raised, and no other.’

Although, by those unhappy persons, who have no just ideas of right and wrong, and who have not intellects for perceiving, that the original power of Great Britain over her colonies, is on the point of expiring beyond all help and remedy, parliament may be supposed to be a loser by the proposed separation; yet all must confess, that his Majesty will be a gainer, inasmuch as he will thereby receive fifteen independent kingdoms in exchange for as many dependent, and *hardly dependent* provinces, and become the father of three millions of free and happy subjects, instead of reigning joint tyrant over so many discontented slaves, or losing by revolt so many of his people. What a divine glow of satisfaction must expand the royal bosom on an event so full of bliss, so consonant to humanity and to virtue!—an event more full of real lustre—more aggrandizing by many degrees than ever before was experienced by any earthly monarch.—How poor, how contemptible, how hateful the triumphs of butchering conquerors compared to this solid glory! May such a transcendant glory be the glory of George the Third!

We must not be surprized if shallow and designing men, some with real, some with affected ignorance, should cry out, ‘ What! enter into treaty with fifteen independent states, and expect them unanimously to join with
 ‘ you in one general league for mutual advantage and security! How chimerical and visionary the project!’ *
 And I do not doubt, but that the swarm of hireling and prostitute scribblers, whose food is confusion, and whose
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very existence, like the vermin in an ulcer, is supported by the diseases of the state, will pour forth all their malignity, in order to discredit, and to damn, if possible, a plan so wise and salutary. But their baneful influence will not, I trust, extend itself farther than to disturb, for a short time, the confused minds of our coffee-house politicians. It will still be obvious to all sensible men, especially to those who compose the national council, that when Great Britain shall have done the noblest act of justice towards the Americans, that the annals of mankind can produce, they will, as one man, fly to her for protection, court her friendship, submit themselves to her advice, and be ready to put into her hands a chart blanche; and so long as she continues to act upon the same principles, she may undoubtedly influence each separate state, and dictate the terms of general accommodation without any fear of even *future* dissatisfactions. To deny these conclusions, would be to deny that effects follow their causes. The author of the tracts has already proved, that it is not our power, but the superior advantage of our trade, which secures to us the commerce of the Americans, or that can secure it to us. We shall still have the same power to awe America into a faithful observance of her treaties that we now have, to enforce a disputed and odious sovereignty, and with this manifest advantage, that treating with each state separately, we shall only have one at a time to contend with; whereas we have experienced, by our stamp and tea projects, that while we pretend to govern the whole, the whole will unite to resist us. That bond of union once dissolved, and the natural and necessary jealousy of each other taking place, Great Britain, as the common umpire, will become in effect the general sovereign, so long as she interposes her good offices for maintaining the common independence; and this her own interest will always dictate. Great Britain will of course take care, in the first place, to recover all her debts in America, which, instead of bad debts, as they are now too justly esteemed to be, will, in the transports of their gratitude for a declared and guaranteed independence, be punctually paid, tho' with their last shilling. Not to mention that fear of offending, (for Great Britain will then become truly formidable to each separate state) would effectually produce this effect, we shall, by the

league secure on the most lasting foundation, every advantage of trade with America we now enjoy, and by the separation relieve ourselves from many heavy expences it now costs us; for a proof of which, I again refer to the Dean's work: we may then disband so much of our expensive and unconstitutional standing army, as we now keep up on account of America; and instead of being execrated, as we now are, for that fleet which blocks up their ports, and is commissioned to humble Boston to the dust, and through her sides, to gall every province on the continent, they will readily consent to its presence for seeing to the exact fulfilling of their treaties, and they will then look upon it with a friendly, an affectionate and respectful eye, while they consider it as their sure protector against invasion, their refuge in distress, and the avenger of their wrongs.—Not being able to pay Great Britain in subsidies of ready money for her protection and friendship, they will grant her an equivalent in *exclusive trade*; and they will enter into some general stipulation for the mode and the measure of payment for any such extraordinary assistance of ships as they may at any time solicit, or we, penetrating the designs of our common enemies, may send to their assistance. As for troops, a country containing millions of inhabitants never can want any: let them rely upon the natural, the best resource—a national militia; but, for heaven's sake! never more let the face of a British soldier be seen in North America. A Flanders or a Germany, on the other side of the globe, would be a grave wide enough to swallow the whole strength and treasure of this kingdom. The Americans are in no condition to set themselves up as a maritime power, or to support a navy fit to guard their own coasts, but must rely upon Great Britain for their safety by sea, as indeed it will ever be their interest so to do, knowing by experience, that with regard to them, *she is not a conquering*, but a commercial state; and having reason to conclude, that a confederacy of their maritime states would probably terminate, like that of Greece, in wars upon one another, and be perverted to answer the ends of ambition to some one, instead of protection to all. After what has been said, I need not point out (but for the sake of my timid and uninformed reader) that it will be totally unnecessary, and unbecoming the dignity of parliament,

parliament, to hesitate a moment in passing the act of declaration, for fear the Americans should not afterwards consent to the league. 'Tis absurd to imagine they will act in contradiction to the principles of *self-interest* and *self-preservation*, merely because they shall be free from controul; nor is it more possible to conceive, how they should object to a treaty with Great Britain, merely because she had just done them an act of magnanimity and generosity unparalleled in history, and given them an undeniable proof, that she was intitled to their unbounded confidence, particularly in its not being possible she should have *any design upon their liberties*. Besides Great Britain, until she have resigned her assumed sovereignty as the mother country, cannot, on the principles of equity, as before illustrated, give any validity to a contract with her children, while held in subjection to her authority. No! the generous spirit that shall set them free, will disdain the meanness of a proceeding so little and so distrustful; and that wisdom which could form so comprehensive a plan, will despise the crookedness and folly of such a narrow policy.

Thus have I given a faint sketch of the many and great benefits of an American league—the reader's imagination and judgment will finish the picture. If then he can think, that they do not infinitely preponderate against the advantages to be hoped for from persisting to assert our odious sovereignty, and plundering the colonies by arbitrary tax-gatherers, I have only to say, that he and I can scarcely be made of the same common materials of humanity; but I shall begin to listen to those profound sages, whose acute penetration, assisted by a certain microscopic species of philosophy, hath discovered, that the Mosaic revelation is a fable, and that, instead of one, there are indeed many different races of men. On the one hand, the most we can expect is a forced and reluctant submission, with some advantages in trade; but these even for a very, *very short period*. Mean while, discontent and detestation, brooding in the bosoms of the colonists, will naturally generate a rancorous hate and abhorrence; which, aided by our restless enemies the French, will shortly terminate in defiance and revenge. On the other hand—but repetition is needless. In short, the multiplying millions of America, must either be our

deadly foes, or our steadfast friends.—Great Britain, take thy choice !

What remains, but that we renew our appeal to the manly sense and magnanimity of the great council of this kingdom ; a kingdom, great and happy above all the kingdoms of the earth ; a council the most august in the whole world, as nursed in the bosom of freedom, and trained in the true principles of just government and pure religion, of which they are the guardians ! If men, thus favoured of heaven, thus enlightened, thus elevated, shall not set examples of sterling virtue, where, alas ! shall we find it ? Consult then your own hearts, ye legislators of Great Britain ! Be true to your own feelings, and let the moral sense prevail. If ye are conscious of a love of power, know that 'tis the genuine offspring of the love of liberty. This the root, that the branch. If your hearts be held in the curling branch's close embrace, think how, in the hearts of all men, the tenacious root strikes to the bottom, and twines it's clasping fibres around the very springs of life, never to lose their hold ! Remember that ye are now to decide on the fate of nations—perhaps your own. Remember the great legislator beholds your doings. Be your doings like unto his doings. Be tender to humanity ; be firm to freedom ; be inflexible to justice. Emancipate in one god-like act, a long roll of nations, whose names it is tedious to recount. In one act, lift up the well-pleasing name of Great Britain to heaven, and spread her matchless fame to the ends of the wondering earth. The depth of her wisdom, the transcendency of her virtue, shall be unexampled, and this act remain a monument of her great felicity, an everlasting model of justice, and a theme of praise to all nations, and to all ages. Potentates have, unto dethroned princes, restored their ravished dominions ; renowned monarchs, sated with ambition, and the abuse of authority, have, in the plenitude of their power, abdicated thrones ; heroes and patriots have given freedom to their native countries ; but for the present legislators of Great Britain was reserved the superior, the supreme glory of bestowing in a foreign soil, liberty on millions !

NOTE, &c. to LETTER X.

• In order to obviate some objections, which, I foresee, both well-meaning and ill-designing persons may be ready to offer to this part of my proposal, let me observe to them, that this negotiation will not be attended with those difficulties and embarrassments, which their imaginations or their artifice may possibly suggest. We may presume, that our commissioners would have the outlines of the proposed league ready sketched out, from the most approved general regulations of the acts of trade and navigation, which now relate to the colonies collectively, and taking in such other conditions as should be evidently calculated for the mutual benefit of Great Britain and North America; one as the planting, the other as the manufacturing country; one as the client, the other as the patron. This general league might be very concise, compared with national treaties in common; it might be extremely perspicuous, and so clearly established on principles of equity and common advantage, as to leave the American deputies without a pretence, or a desire to propose any but slight alterations, and without a possibility of not acceding to it with the utmost readiness and satisfaction; and it is still less likely, there should be any insuperable difficulties started by them, when they should come to enter into their respective separate treaties.

How the trade of a colony can be limited, and its manufactures restricted by the mother-country, on the principles of justice, *except with its own free consent*, I confess I have not eyes to discover. If it can be made appear, that the British parliament hath a right to say to an American, ‘*you shall not make a hat to cover your head, nor a shoe to defend your foot; you shall not manufacture a piece of cloth to keep out the cold, nor a knife wherewithal to cut your victuals;*’ why, I pray, may it not likewise say, ‘*give us the money out of your pocket?*’ To obtain a little money, may be thought, and by Mr. Grenville and his disciples was thought, as *convenient* to the state, as the employment of our manufacturers.

Observing, that not only the unreasoning multitude, but the members in both houses of parliament, minority as well as majority, not even excepting the honest opposers of American taxation, all seemed to agree, that Great Britain hath a right to bind the colonies by her regulations and restrictions in and upon their trade, navigation and manufactures; I, for a long time, suffered my own reason to be borne down, and my feelings suppressed by the weight of such respectable, though not infallible authority; but, the self-evident fallaciousness of this proposition

proposition for ever recurring upon me, and striking my mind with redoubled force every time I considered it, I was at last obliged to yield to the force of an irresistible internal conviction, and to reject that doctrine as erroneous, and as a national prejudice, arising from *precedents*, established by the mother-country, when her children were helpless new-born babes; and carefully instilled into their minds while growing up, as among the sacred precepts of filial piety; from the self-flattering and self-interested suggestions of British minds; and from the general acknowledgment of the Americans themselves. One of their judicious and truly patriotic writers (before referred to p. 5. in a note to the first letter) on this head, expresses himself thus:—"Great Britain has prohibited the manufacturing iron and steel in these colonies, without any objection to her *right* of doing it. The like right she must have to prohibit any other manufacture among us. Thus she is possessed of an undisputed *precedent* on that point. This authority, she will say, is founded on the *original intention* of settling these colonies; that is, that she should manufacture for them, and that they should supply her with materials. The *equity* of this policy, she will also say, has been universally acknowledged by the colonies, who never have made the least objection to statutes for that purpose; and will further appear, by the *mutual benefits* flowing from this usage, ever since the settlement of these colonies.

"Our great advocate, Mr. Pitt, in his speeches on the debate, concerning the repeal of the *stamp-act*, acknowledged, that Great Britain could restrain our manufactures. His words are these:—"This kingdom, as the supreme governing and legislative power," [even this great man hath not got over the little idea of nations remaining in perpetual subjection to nations from which they sprang] has ALWAYS bound the colonies by her regulations and RESTRICTIONS in trade, in navigation, in MANUFACTURES, in every thing, *except that of taking the money out of their pockets, WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT*. Again, he says, we may bind their trade, CONFINE THEIR MANUFACTURES, and exercise every power whatever, *except that of taking their money out of their pockets, WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT*. [These are pretty large concessions to the pride and ambition of Great Britain, and yet she is not satisfied with them.] Here then, my dear countrymen, ROUSE yourselves, and behold the ruin hanging over your heads. If you ONCE admit, that Great Britain may lay duties upon her exportations to us, *for the purpose of levying money on us only*, she will then have nothing to do, but to lay those duties on the articles which she prohibits us to manufacture,—and the tragedy

gedy of American liberty is finished. We have been prohibited from procuring manufactures, in all cases, any where, but from *Great Britain*, (except linens, which we are permitted to import directly from Ireland.) We have been prohibited, in some cases, from manufacturing for ourselves, and may be prohibited in others. We are, therefore, exactly in the situation of a city besieged, which is surrounded by the works of the besiegers in every part but one. If that is closed up, no step can be taken, but to surrender at discretion. If Great Britain can order us to come to her for necessities we want, and can order us to pay what taxes she pleases before we take them away, or when we land them here, we are as abject slaves as France or Poland can shew in wooden shoes and with uncombed hair.

Perhaps the nature of the necessities of dependant states, caused by the policy of a governing one, for her own benefit, may be elucidated by a fact mentioned in history. When the Carthaginians were possessed of the island of Sardinia, they made a decree, that the Sardinians should not raise corn, nor get it any other way than from the Carthaginians. Then, by imposing any taxes they would upon it, they drained from the miserable Sardinians any sums they pleased; and whenever that oppressed people made the least movement to assert their liberty, their tyrants starved them to death, or submission."

But why, I want to know, are the colonies to be held for ever in the situation of *cities besieged*? Why is the mother-country to be the sole judge of such restrictions as may be consistent with the original intention of settling colonies; seeing that this original intention was not, in some cases, the intention of the legislature, but the intention of the emigrants themselves, when they fled from persecution, misery, and want, to take shelter in the more friendly wilds of America? Why are the selfish and arbitrary terms prescribed by one party, to be implicitly received by the other, in a commercial affair of mutual concern, and professed by the dictating party, to be for their mutual advantage? Voluntary consent and agreement, independent bargain and contract, are in the very essence of all equitable dealings in trade. I presume the Americans may be as good judges, as the people who ridiculously assume the right of judging for them, what it is their advantage to restrict themselves to in manufactures and trade; and will be ready to take care to confine themselves to such branches, as will be most consistent with that first political maxim, of securing, at all events, the protection of Great Britain, and her valuable trade, from which they have benefits to expect, that no other European market can yield them. To acknowledge their independency, and to form

form with them a friendly league, is therefore the only method, *on the principles of equity*, of laying them under restrictions in trade and manufactures, for the exclusive advantage of their protectors; but continuing to impose these restrictions by *our own authority*, and by *force*, as it deeply effects them in their property, by *preventing money coming into their pockets*, (which is very nearly allied, when done unjustly, to *taking it out of their pockets without their consent*) is undoubtedly tyrannical.

When our legislators, and others, divesting themselves of every selfish and arbitrary bias, (the characteristics of little and uncultivated minds) and guarding against all suggestions, but those of truth, justice, and benevolence, shall have duly reflected on this very important question, I flatter myself they will perceive the wisdom of our *anticipating* the Americans in a candid discussion of it, and will agree with me, in sentiment, that America cannot, according to any ideas of justice or freedom, be laid under restrictions of any kind, for the purpose of strengthening and aggrandizing the state or legislature of Great Britain, *except with her free will and consent*, independently and voluntarily given by express stipulation and contract; and consequently, that they will see the moral as well as the political necessity, for the proposed DECLARATION and LEAGUE; and that, in fact, it remains for Great Britain to choose, whether by acting the deaf and haughty tyrant, she shall sink herself into poverty and contempt, or, by a conduct worthy herself and her boasted knowledge, and love of freedom, she shall render herself, not only the all-powerful guarantee of the independence, and monopolizer of the trade of America, but at the same time the dreaded, the dictatorial arbiter of Europe.



F I N I S.

A P P E N D I X.

TO THE L E G I S L A T U R E.

L E T T E R XI.

January 17, 1775.

THROUGH the means of the persevering virtue of our American brethren, the heavy shades of parliamentary oppression being just in motion to retire, and the dawn of a constitutional revolution now beginning to gild the political horizon *, the heart of every anxious lover of his country, and of every friend to the rights of mankind, must be greatly cheered thereat, as they will naturally flatter themselves with hopes, that the approaching day of deliberation shall bring forth healing councils and measures, sound and solid wisdom, genuine and complete justice, which could not fail to secure the lasting prosperity of Great-Britain and her affectionate offspring. It is with the most lively sympathy in these hopes, and with the deepest gratitude to Providence for these auspicious appearances, that I advance, once more, to exhort ye to pay due attention to the magnitude and importance of the business ye are about to enter upon; and that ye will suffer no motives whatever to influence your sentiments or your actions, except those alone which shall arise from mature deliberation upon, and a rigid observance of, your duty to your country. Unless these considerations shall have

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* The writer is obliged to acknowledge that in this particular his intelligence failed him, and certain appearances in which he was too prone to trust deceived him.

an entire ascendancy in your minds, in vain will ye attempt to act the part of wise politicians; in vain will ye pretend to insure to these kingdoms any substantial and permanent advantages; as recent experience in American politics may amply serve to verify. And it is also because there still appears to remain on the minds of Britons a strong tincture of prejudice against a full and complete enjoyment of liberty by their American brethren, that I take upon me once again to call up your attention to the fatal system of oppression that hath so long been the reproach of the British parliament, the false estimates that have been made of American knowledge and public spirit, together with the erroneous maxims of government that have, through a strange infatuation, been thereupon adopted, and I fear are even now relied on by some; and that I also once again presume to recommend a parliamentary *declaration of the independency of the American colonies*, and then, that there be formed, by means of a general league, such an *alliance* between us as alone, in my opinion, can be effectually and durably beneficial to both countries: the nature, the practicability, the expediency and happy fruits of which league were pointed out in my letter of the 14th of April, 1774. Although my sentiments were delivered somewhat unsystematically, and only occasionally, as ill health and other avocations afforded me leisure; and notwithstanding my arguments were accommodated to the limitations of a news-paper communication, I nevertheless produced, as I apprehend, sufficient reasons in support of the proposal I offered to your consideration. Many more, of great weight and intrinsic excellence, will suggest themselves to every sensible man, who is possessed of knowledge enough to constitute him a judge of this question, provided his mind be prone to candour, and his heart to rectitude. It is true that at present I stand almost alone on this ground, and that men of the first abilities, and of the highest senatorial reputation, at the same time that they have uniformly condemned and vigorously opposed the measures of administration, have still invariably declared themselves the advocates, nay even the champions, of parliamentary sovereignty. But, so far as I have been able to learn, and I have not been negligent to gain information, they have contented themselves with *declaring* without

without *supporting* their opinion. No one of them has, that I can recollect, justified it by argument; or by bringing it to the only touchstone of all pretensions to sovereignty, by shewing that it is rightly calculated to obtain, for *the people governed*, the effectual security and continuance of their liberty and property: nor hath any one, that I know of, refuted my arguments for the proposed independency, or those of dean Tucker, which I have referred to. I hope no one will be rash enough to say, that national morality and justice are not regarded by the Sovereign Judge of all nations, or that that state which seeks to aggrandize itself, at the expence of another, by craft and subtlety, by imposition and chicanery, or by any other wicked means, either deserves, or is likely to experience, any long continuance of God's favour and protection. Hath not the warning-voice of all history, from the first memorials of nations, uniformly inculcated this lesson by dreadful examples in every instance without exception, and shewn us that it is in the very laws of nature, in the necessary constitution of things, that national integrity must in the end produce national happiness, and national turpitude, as certainly be followed by national misery?—Had we indeed no historical testimony in proof of this doctrine, yet its truth is clearly deducible by reasoning; since there is this evident distinction to be made between the situation of nations and of individuals, men will continue to exist after death, but nations have *no hereafter*, and therefore God's just and wise providence seems to have appointed them their rewards and punishments in *this* world. But to return, some there are who have indeed affected to treat the Idea of making the colonies independent, as too visionary and chimerical to be adopted by men practised in state affairs.—It should seem, however, from recent experience, that men *practised* in state affairs are not exempt, any more than those who *reason* on them from adopting visionary projects. But novelty doth by no means necessarily imply either fallacy or impracticability, as hath been well exemplified in these latter ages, which have beheld various political phenomena altogether unknown before in the course of human affairs, and which were the natural effects of doctrines, whose chimerical appearance, while

now, were quite as alarming to the timid as this can be. Our *union* with Scotland, when first proposed, struck the majority in each division of the island with as great a panic fear of danger and ruin, as our *disunion* from America (if that can be called a disunion of countries on different sides of the globe that is only meant to ascertain their true relation to each other) can possibly produce in the minds of any. The crude and dreaded idea took a full century to ripen, before it could be relished by the people. Our general experience, since the revival of learning, ought to reconcile us to the making of innovations upon all suspicious systems, wherever the suggesting principles appear, upon close examination, to be sound, just, and uncontroversial; and it need scarcely be remarked, that it hath been by such means alone that we have hitherto so successfully combated ignorance, superstition, tyranny and persecution, together with innumerable errors, in the whole circle of science, and that we must keep in the same path if we propose to make any farther progress. But how, indeed, can any improvements be made, except by adopting and acting upon new ideas, as they arise on a contemplation of new circumstances and contingencies? Provided the British legislature had not first inconsiderately, and afterwards perversely, trespassed on the rights of the colonies, slighted their just complaints, despised their remonstrances, and, by a long and wanton series of injuries, insults, and oppressions, roused their friends, and obliged them to take the trouble of thinking, it is probable that the idea of their having a right to independency might have lain dormant, in the unexplored repositories of truth, for ages to come. If therefore they have prematurely brought on new contingencies, they must not be offended with, nor inattentive to, new ideas. Having myself the highest respect for the shining talents, the knowledge and principles of some great men from whom I differ, both with regard to the right, and to the expediency also, of asserting our parliamentary sovereignty over the North-American states, I wish most earnestly they may enter on a full discussion of those questions, either before the public, or in parliament; since I promise myself, they will ingenuously follow whithersoever truth and

and justice shall lead them; either to their own conviction, or to mine; who am prepared to abandon my own opinion, the moment I can discover it to be no longer tenable without dissimulation or prevarication: but I am principally moved to this wish, through a strong persuasion that the future prosperity of this, and the numerous nations of North America, (consequently the happiness of millions of our fellow-creatures) may in a great measure depend *on the opinions*, upon the two points in question, of a very few leading men, who, at this crisis, have voices in the British parliament. My voice, had I the honour of a seat, should most assuredly be heard to move for the independency of America.

It is well known, and severely felt by us at this day, that the revolution, to which we owe our salvation from crown prerogative, from popery and despotism, glorious and providential as it was, had still its imperfections; and that these remain to be reformed, or they will one day inevitably overwhelm the liberties, extinguish the last spark of virtue, and put a fatal period to the felicities of Britain. If ill consequences of such extent, could flow from beginnings so minute, as to be overlooked on that day of reformation, when national reflection and wisdom were displayed in so uncommon a degree; ought we not to be on our guard, while in the act of settling the constitution of the American states upon a durable basis; and fixing a standard, a Magna Charta, to which the people of those states may at all times appeal, in defence of their rights and liberties; that we look not only to the securing of the corner-stones and main buttresses, but take care also to cement the other, though inferior yet necessary, parts so closely together, as to prevent their being again shaken by the abuse of power; or sapped by the insinuations of corruption, that grand specific for the dissolution of those fortresses of freedom, which mock all other attacks. And allow me to remind ye, that at the period of the revolution, the dreadful state of the kingdom, when the government was dissolved, and all men impatient of a settlement for fear of an anarchy; when contending princes were striving for the throne, and all the powerful states of Europe ready to take their advantages, such a conjuncture
afforded

afforded excuses for much greater oversights than *at this time*, when we have leisure to keep our usual holidays, and are so much at our ease as to require diversions and all sorts of pleasurable amusements to fill up the vacuities of life, allowances can be made for. That man therefore who, on this solemn occasion, shall not pay the most sacred regard to the rights and liberties of his American brethren and their posterity, be his professions, and even his actions, in other respects what they may, must be a very sorry pretender to patriotism. The true patriot will be as strenuous an opposer of national and parliamentary, as of regal tyranny: he will not attempt to remove the mote from the ministerial eye, before he have first plucked out the beam from his own. Consider, then, what in fact we are doing, and whither the unavoidable consequences will lead us, when we assert our parliamentary sovereignty. If it cannot open to us the *purses* of the *Americans*, at the discretion of the *British commons*,—which heaven of its mercy to ourselves forbid!—what end is it to answer?

LETTER

L E T T E R XII.

January 18, 1775.

“ **I**T is,” we are told, “ to enable *us* to regulate the trade of the Americans, to *restrict* their navigation and manufactures, to *bind* them, and to exercise over them *every power whatever*, except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their consent.” But whence, I trow, do we derive any just authority for all these enormous pretensions? Not, I am persuaded, from any part of that implied compact between governors and the governed, which, in reasoning upon just government, we must ever suppose and argue from, because the law of nature hath laid us under an eternal obligation so to do. This compact, which none but tyrants will disclaim as a true criterion, evidently proves that, *not only* in taxation, but in *making the laws* by which *every other part* of the government is regulated, it is necessary the people do partake, either personally or by their representatives; otherwise, more or less, they will be slaves: and surely it is not in England, *the very treading on whose happy soil changes a galley slave into a free man*, that we shall inculcate doctrines, and enact laws to fix a real slavery in *any* degree on our kindred! In the whole compass of argumentation, which hath of late been taken with regard to the respective rights of Britain and of British America, I am bold to affirm, that no demonstration of the aforesaid rights, claimed by parliament, hath been given; and I must needs think that no demonstration of them can be given; but reasons sufficient have appeared to convince honest and thinking men, who are at all acquainted with the law of nature, and the spirit of our inestimable constitution, that such claims on our part are manifestly contrary to the rules of justice and the principles of freedom; while those who have made history and human nature their study, will see as clearly that their direct tendency is *to defeat the very ends*, for the proposed attainment of which it is pretended

tended they are urged. Who can conceive, that a power so very loosely defined, so extremely extensive, and without a counterpoise; one which (notwithstanding the laboured distinctions vainly attempted) cannot but make very free with the *pockets* of the Americans, though not perhaps in the open and undisguised form of *taxation*, and in which *not one* of the people, *not one* of the representatives of the people is to participate; a power which is to be lodged in the hands of a body of men residing *beyond the ocean*, having already more business at home than they can or will execute to the satisfaction of their own countrymen? Who, I say, can conceive that *such* power in *such* hands can possibly, in the nature of things, be well administered, even in the most ordinary Instances? They who can believe any thing so incredible, ought not hastily to pronounce plans they do not comprehend, or rather *will not take the trouble* to consider, to be *visionary* and *chimerical*. To me it appears self-evident, that the exercise of such a power, how temperately, how cautiously soever, instead of extinguishing the resentments, and gaining the confidence of the Americans, must necessarily preserve alive their utmost jealousy and distrust; to produce with a moral certainty in their due time and regular order, complaint, dispute, opposition, and resistance; terminating finally, and probably at *no great distance of time*, in defiance and contempt; all which fatal chain of consequences may be wholly prevented, as I have elsewhere shewn more at large, provided we will act justly, by anticipating their natural wishes, and aspirings after independency *, with a desire of which they were inspired by their Creator when he constituted them rational creatures and free agents; not to observe their feeling themselves to be, in their collective capacities, powerful nations, having within themselves the rights and actual powers of a compleat legislation. He who perceives no signs of conviction in the countenances of those to whom he addresses himself, is apt to suppose he hath left untouched those particular arguments, on which the success of his discourse is principally to turn; when sometimes the fault is on the side of the auditors, whose passions and prejudices

* Dean Tucker's Tracts, p. 153.

judges block up all the avenues to the judgment-seat of reason in the head, and the throne of truth in the heart, so that even demonstrations and self-evident moral truths shall only enter at one ear, and go out at the other. So might I perhaps hope to *convince*, by continuing to *write*, did I not reflect that, provided I have truth on my side, I have already written enough; it now only remaining with my readers to *convince themselves*, by setting aside their passions and prejudices (particularly their lust of dominion, and their unjust, not to say *unwise*, selfishness) and by conscientiously appealing to *their own* understandings and hearts. There, if they will thus apply, I am persuaded they will find, to their great benefit and satisfaction, all the truths and motives to action, which are necessary to give success to the cause I have humbly endeavoured to plead. I pretend not to force, but should be happy to win their assent. They must be *willing* converts; they must *wish* to be of my opinion; and bring their own love of truth, justice and freedom to my aid, or I shall certainly fail to be instrumental in removing their objections. I will therefore take leave of my subject, with a recapitulation only of the principal doctrines, which, in the course of these letters, are advanced or argued from. These then are amongst my positions:

1st, That the people of British America cannot lawfully be taxed, in any shape whatsoever, except in *their own assemblies*.

2dly, That a duty laid upon any article of our exports to them, and made payable before exportation, except *they be at liberty* to purchase the same article *elsewhere*, is a tax*; and being *not given and granted* in their own assemblies, but *imposed* by parliament, it is *illegal*.

3dly, That it is either a *weak* or *wicked* conduct in those, who lay any stress on the ridiculous distinction, where there is no difference between *internal* and *external* taxes; since taxes are taxes, and all that is necessary to know is, whether they be *legal* or *illegal*.

4thly, That a *parliamentary* prohibition to manufacture their own iron and other commodities, together with an
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obligation

* Farmer's Letters, 1st edit. p. 16.

obligation to take them wrought from Great-Britain, and *her only*, at a *greater charge* than that at which they could supply themselves by their own manufacture, is a *tax*, and *therefore* illegal.

5thly, That every *parliamentary* limitation of their trade and navigation, which operates to their disadvantage *in a pecuniary sense* is so much *in the nature*, although it may not come within the precise definition of a tax, that, (being an *imposition*) it is evidently illegal.

6thly, That neither grants nor charters, precedents nor statutes; no, nor even the voluntary contract, the express act and engagement of the first planters of a distant colony, can in the smallest degree impeach the rights of freedom in their descendants, whenever independency shall be their choice.

7thly, That it is a mistaken notion, that planting of colonies and extending of empire are necessarily one and the same thing.

8thly, That it is in the very essence of liberty, that every state hath a right to choose its own governors.

9thly, That all pretensions to govern a community, so far distant from those who make these pretensions, that they cannot possibly secure to it those ends for which alone all just government is acknowledged to be instituted, are nugatory in their own nature.

10thly, That *the people of America* are too far distant from Great-Britain to obtain *those ends* by *her* exercising a legislative authority over them, and therefore *cannot be subject* to such an authority *.

11thly,

* I flatter myself the author of the following letter will pardon the liberty I take in using it as a note.

To the PRINTER of the GAZETTEER.

The supreme legislative power of parliament over the internal government and taxation of the colonies, having become matter of dispute, it is proper to examine whether this claim of supremacy is novel, or has any ancient foundation, and to that end, whether the inhabitants of the colonies have at any time heretofore been legally considered as *subjects of this*

11thly, That an *union* with America, by means of admitting an American representation in the British parliament, is the wildest of all chimeras; as it was the basest of all insidious designs in a certain governor, to propose to administration a surprisal of them into this snare, *he knowing*, and thinking *they did not know*, (vide his own Select Letters, p. 34, 40) that it would be subversive of their liberties.

12thly,

this kingdom, during their residence in the colonies. That the power of internal taxation has not been exercised, will not be disputed; and whoever examines, will find, that from the restoration to the present time, appeals or writs of error from the ordinary courts of justice in the colonies, do not go to parliament, as in England and Scotland, but have been always made to his Majesty in council, and proceeded upon by *petition or libel*; and the lands, tenements, hereditaments, goods and chattels of his Majesty's subjects in the colonies, have not been considered as belonging to *subjects of this kingdom*, all of whom are entitled to trial by the *ordinary* course of the law; but have been considered as *subjects of his Majesty*, governed internally by the laws which their assemblies from time to time establish, and tried by the *privy-council* according to those laws, and the common law, and not in the *ordinary* course of the law.

If parliament had the legal supremacy, appeals and writs of error, between the subjects of their jurisdiction, must have been decided in the *ordinary* course by parliament, and not in the *extraordinary* course by his Majesty's privy-council.

If parliament had been the supreme legislature of the colonies, would not the laws of the colonies have been communicated to them? On the contrary, the colonies have never consulted with, or communicated to parliament any of their laws; it is law to them because they make it, and it is a rule to the crown because the royal assent is given. They have no peers to judge between the crown and the council, and therefore his Majesty alone is the supreme legal judge, and his council only can ultimately decide, and not the ordinary courts of justice, or ordinary course of law.

When parliament was intended to be supreme legislators of Scotland, representation in parliament was stipulated for the people, and provision was made by the act of union for the

12thly, That the *superstitious* notion of the uniform progress of empire *westward only*; and the *absurd* one, that Great-Britain must therefore one day become a province to America, are founded on superficial, empty, mistaken,

final determination of appeals by parliament, according to the laws of Scotland; in the colonies different laws necessarily must be made for each, with which nobody but his Majesty and themselves have any concern, nor have any other power hitherto interfered; if they were to be considered as *subjects of this kingdom*, what would be the situation of every lord chancellor, lord keeper, lord privy seal, lord president of the council, and chief justice, who have sat upon appeals from the colonies from the restoration to this period? When, by the act of the 16th of Charles the Second, intitled, An act for regulating the privy-council, and taking away the court commonly called the star-chamber, it is enacted, "That neither his Majesty nor his privy-council have, or ought to have, *any* jurisdiction, power, or authority, by English bill, *petition*, articles, *libel*, or any other arbitrary way whatsoever, to examine, or draw into question, determine or dispose of the lands, tenements, hereditaments, goods or chattels, of *any of the subjects of this kingdom*, but that the same ought to be tried and determined by the ordinary courts of justice, and by the ordinary course of the law:" and this law inflicts a penalty upon every person offending, for the first offence 500*l.* second offence 1000*l.* third offence disabled, and *ipso facto* rendered incapable to bear his office, and disabled to make any gift, grant, conveyance, or other disposition of any of his lands, tenements, or hereditaments, good or chattels, or take any benefit of any gift, conveyance, or legacy to his own use; and furthermore, to forfeit treble damages to the party aggrieved.

The gentlemen who contend for the supreme legislature of parliament over persons residing in the colonies are called upon to shew, how any lawyer, from the 16th of king Charles to this time, could have sat in privy-council, and have examined and drawn into question, determined, and disposed of the lands, tenements, hereditaments, goods and chattels of the inhabitants of the several colonies, if they had not (even to this moment) denied them *to be subjects of this kingdom*, and consequently not subject to the internal legislation, or taxation of parliament.

April 12, 1755.

CURT IUS.

mistaken, and contradictory observations, utterly void of truth, with regard to the past, and equally destitute of probability, with respect to the future.

13thly, That if we would reap any lasting commercial advantages from, and preserve any durable power over, the American states, it must be by *withdrawing*, not *asserting* our claims to parliamentary sovereignty; thereby finally removing every cause of jealousy towards us, and proving that, with regard to them, Great-Britain is not a *conquering*, but a *commercial* state; not an *oppressive* ruler, but an *equal* trader; not a *designer* upon, but an undoubted *protector* of their rights and liberties against all invaders: bound to her by the ties of blood and mutual interests, by sincere love and friendship, which abhors dependance; by the influences of one common language, law, and religion; by the same manners, fashions and habits, and by every other cementing principle which hath power to take hold of the human heart.

14thly, That by making them independent of our will and pleasure, we shall render them effectually dependent upon our influence, and subservient to our interest and glory; this free country thus resembling its own kings, who always may, whenever they please, be more powerful, glorious, and happy, than the proudest of the monarchs who tyrannize over the rest of Europe.

15thly, That it is in our power to bring into this kingdom, with *their voluntary consent and agreement*, every shilling * the British Americans have in the world, beyond what is barely necessary for their own circulation; but that if, instead of equitable means, we will madly use no other than those of *brutal force*, they will speedily defy, impoverish and despise us.

16thly, That it is now, through our own rash councils and violent proceedings, too late to think of steering any middle course, of adopting measures for *light oppressions*,^o

* Considerations on the Measures carrying on with respect to the British Colonies in North-America, pag. 108, 120; and Tucker's Tracts, pag. 206 to 216.

oppressions, and being only *moderately tyrannical* * ; for that the Americans, from this day forward, must either be our independent, affectionate, and fast friends, or else the most deadly of our foes.

17thly and finally, That by means of a parliamentary declaration of their independency and a national league with them, we may, but by no other means can, effectually promote and secure, on a right basis, the mutual prosperity of both countries.

To this recapitulation let me only add a fervent prayer, that it may please God to endue the king and the lords of the council, the ministers of state, and all the nobility, the representatives of the people, and all in authority, with true wisdom and understanding, giving them grace to execute justice and to maintain truth ; and that it may please him likewise to give unto all nations. unity, peace, and concord to the end of time ; but more especially to Great-Britain and British America, which have reason to esteem themselves, with pious gratitude, his peculiar people, since, through his especial favour, they are so eminently exalted above all other nations, inasmuch as it hath pleased him, in his good Providence, to bless them with a free, a perfect † constitution of government ; a constitution which will improve with age, and never can know decay, so long as the people shall retain their virtue.

P. S. The author, who wishes to attain as much self-knowledge as possible, would (without any irony) be much obliged to the *Critical Reviewer* of his pamphlet if

* It is now only the month of April, 1775, and, so true was this remark, that we have already enacted laws which must either enforce their obedience to our tyranny, oblige them to abandon their habitations and country to seek for freedom amongst the savages in the wilderness, or absolutely and without a figure of speech starve them to death ; except, maddening with a sense of such monstrous oppression, they sullenly and contemptuously, as Mr. Burke expresses it, “ cast your sovereignty in your face.”

† Letter V.

if he would take the trouble to *prove* to him what he really cannot believe on his mere *ipse dixit*, viz. that he is a *declaimer*, not a *reasoner*, provided the assertion be true; because he hopes he shall ever be open to conviction, and ready to accept of any one's assistance who will kindly lead him into the way of truth; an adherence to which he thinks is every man's *interest*. He feels a strong assurance within his own mind of being *no declaimer*, and though perhaps *no acute reasoner*, yet he thinks he is *a just reasoner*, or rather *an appealer to reason*; and he is inclined to esteem the practice of appealing as the best and most useful, because generally the most successful mode of reasoning.



A
L E T T E R
TO *the Constitution.*
EDMUND BURKE, Esq;

Controverting the Principles of
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT,

Laid down in his lately published

S P E E C H
O N
AMERICAN TAXATION,

Delivered in the
HOUSE of COMMONS,
On the 19th of APRIL, 1774.

L O N D O N :

Printed for the AUTHOR, by H. S. Woodfall.
Sold by J. WILKIE, No. 71, St. Paul's Church-yard.
M,DCC,LXXV.



ADVERTISEMENT.

" IT may not be improper to inform the pub-
 " lic that this letter was ready for the press
 " when Lord Chatham's conciliatory proposal
 " made its appearance. In hopes that some fea-
 " sible plan of accommodation with the colonies
 " would thereupon have taken place, and such
 " measures have ensued as might have made it
 " unnecessary for the advocates of American free-
 " dom any longer to have kept up in its full
 " force their contention against an overstrained
 " and unjustifiable authority, the author thought
 " proper to with-hold it awhile from the public
 " eye: but being totally disappointed in his wishes,
 " and now despairing that any good consequences
 " whatever can result from the measures deter-
 " mined to be pursued by government (notwith-
 " standing the late attempt of administration to
 " amuse us by making a shew of taking new
 " ground) he now humbly submits it to the pe-
 " rusal of his fellow-citizens; in hopes that, small
 " as may be its comparative weight, it yet may
 " prove a mite not unacceptable in the scale which
 " the good genius of Britain and of British Ame-
 " rica is anxious should preponderate. In saying
 " that he despairs of any good consequences from
 " administration's pertinacious oppression of the
 " colonies, he begs to be understood as meaning
 " only *those good consequences which the authors of*
 " *the present measures esteem to be such, and which*
 " *they propose to bring about.*

“ Indeed he hopes, *and will venture to prophecy,*
 “ that, odious and shocking as are the means by
 “ them to be made use of, yet the end will be
 “ the same as himself hath proposed to obtain by
 “ a very different way of proceeding ; and that,
 “ take which course we will, the present dispute
 “ cannot possibly terminate in any thing short of
 “ American Independence. Whether it will prove
 “ better to have severed the colonies from this
 “ country by the hellish sword of war, or by the
 “ generous hand of equity ; whether it will prove
 “ better to have inspired them with revenge and
 “ deadly hatred, or with gratitude and warm
 “ affection ; and whether one or the other will
 “ prove most beneficial to us, time alone must
 “ finally determine.”



To E. B. Esq;

SIR,

February, 1775.

WHEN my twelfth letter to the Legislature, proposing the independency of America, went to the press (see Public Advertiser, *Jan.* 23, 24,) I thought I had taken a final leave of the subject; but several passages in your late published speech tending, as I fear, to mislead the public judgment, teach me that it lies too near my heart for me to suffer them to pass altogether unnoticed. It is the convincing argumentation with which you demonstrate the folly, as well as injustice, of taxing America; together with the persuasive powers of eloquence there displayed, powers which can sometimes charm us into a belief of what we do not comprehend, that make your error, with regard to the sovereignty of Great-Britain, the more dangerous at this crisis, when all good men are anxious for the rights of America, though few of them are free from your own mistake, and when even the dissipated triflers of the age have a wish at least, if not a thought, to bestow in their favour. The multitude in this kingdom, when they become serious, and take a thing up in earnest, are too formidable for a minister to contend with; but alas! they believe only as they are taught by some great authority: and even men of knowledge and reflection pay it sometimes too much respect. For my own part, Sir, I look up to you as to one of those "guide-posts and land-marks of state whose credit in the "nation" gives general currency to your opinions; I consider you as one of our great national "lights." I wish therefore, as a matter of the last importance to the public, that you may ever hold on your course with regularity and truth: and not, like the changeful "luminary*" you so happily describe, misguide your observers.

Believe

* Charles Townshend.

Believe me, Sir, I am not one of those who can, without a painful reluctance, withdraw my admiration from the glories of the sun, in order to contemplate his spots. But it is by an accurate observation of them, that we correct erroneous science; causing, as I may say, by these means, even the darkneses of that brilliant orb to throw light upon objects of importance to mankind. Had I a bad opinion of your heart, I would not make the vain attempt to argue you into the right; nor would I provoke you to exert your superior talents still more, in order to destroy the truth. 'Tis not as you are ingenious, but ingenuous, that I mean to dispute with you. Nor is it for me to take the large field of discussion; to lay open all history, or to unfold the legitimate laws of our constitution. I leave these deep and capacious reservoirs of knowledge and policy to be ransacked by those who are my superiors in learning and eloquence; and are better able to take a laborious part in the great cause we are now engaged in; contenting myself to draw from the fountain head, a small portion of the waters of truth; which, like a dew from heaven, have, I believe, the most kindly influence upon the production and growth of true wisdom. It is to the pure, the genuine principles of our perfect constitution, and the unalterable law of nature, that I will refer; it is to your reason and your conscience I will appeal. This will bring the question within a very small compass, and to a short issue. But be apprized, Sir, that it is not to any creature of your own imagination, an *ideal* "*constitution of the British Empire* [94.]," (for I totally deny its existence, and believe that a faith and hope in it lead to perdition,) which I now mean to refer to; but to the *constitution of Great-Britain*; whose existence, divinity, and powers of salvation, are known to us all. This is the *only* compass that ever proved a sure guide upon the tempestuous sea of politics. It is a *sure* guide, because it is a compass *without variation*. It points not to any earthly loadstone, jostled by some convulsion of nature out of the true axis of our crazy planet, but the cause of its magnetism is the rock of truth, fixed in the pole of heaven from all eternity; immoveable as the throne, immutable as the nature of God. He who shall imagine that the British constitution is a compass adapted only to

one

one latitude and longitude ; and when he arrives with it at a distant shore, depending on delusive observations, shall suppose a very considerable variation ; and then, like the ignorant skipper of some little coasting bark, shall go about to adjust it, to the imaginary occasion, by giving the needle a corresponding deviation from its representative on the card, or rather chart ; shall soon find himself in a most dangerous, if not a fatal error. Happy if he make not shipwreck of the political vessel. Great knowledge and practical experience may be necessary to those who hold the command, who guide the helm, and direct all the manœuvres in the ship ; but *the very cabin-boy knows his compass* ; and when the port is in sight, and all the dangers of the navigation are above water and in view, *he can tell*, as well as the pilot, how to steer *for* the one or *from* the other. When out of sight of land, he knows equally well, that in order to arrive safe in America, he must steer to the Westward ; nor could all the sophistry of the pilot, though he spoke with the tongue of an angel, nor the authority of the captain, though aided by the logic of the cat-o'-nine-tails, ever convince him, that it would be possible to secure a prosperous voyage by steering either East, South, or North. So when the British constitution, whose form is so manifest to the eye of common sense, and whose principles by their self-evidency are so simple and so obvious, lies before us, 'tis in vain for ministers, for statesmen, or even for orators, to endeavour to impose upon our understandings, by representing that we must hold one course in Britain, and another in America, for attaining civil security and happiness ; when it is impossible to arrive at them, but by keeping the prow in a true direction for liberty, whose star, like as the rock of truth, is in the pole and fast by the throne of heaven. It is true indeed, and for the reasons you have [91] assigned, that the nearest course we can keep is but " an approximation towards the right " one ;" yet we shall run into a most ruinous error, if, to the *unavoidable* deviations caused by the intestine motion and tempestuous agitations of the political element, we make any *intentional* one, by playing tricks with our needle, and departing from that course which our compass, if *faithfully consulted*, shews to be the true one. You desire
Great-

Great-Britain to "be content to bind America by laws
 " of trade; because she hath *always* done it: and not to
 " burthen her with taxes, because she was not used to do
 " so *from the beginning*. These," you add, "are the
 " arguments of states and kingdoms." [89, 90.] But,
 with your leave, Sir, these are the arguments of Egyptian
 task-masters, of Carthaginian blood-suckers, of Roman
 monsters and Spanish tyrants; for silencing the murmurs
 of their fleeced, pardon me, I mean flead provinces and
 miserable bond-men. What! Sir; are prescripts and pre-
 cedents, be they natural or unnatural, be they good or
 bad, be they just or unjust; the proper arguments of states
 and kingdoms? So then, nothing is wanting to reconcile
 us to the most infernal way of governing, but that our
 tyrant hath always done so; that he was used to act the
 tyrant from the beginning!—Fie, fie! What a lesson
 for a young Telemachus to learn from the lips of his
 Mentor! "You may be as great a tyrant as you please,
 " provided you only establish your precedents in the begin-
 " ning." Should murmurs afterwards arise, or the accu-
 mulating weight of your power in length of time become so
 intolerable as to cause your *right* to be called in question;
 —"reason not at all—oppose the ancient policy and prac-
 " tice of the empire, as a rampart against the speculations
 " of innovators,—and you will stand on great, manly; and
 " sure ground."—Excellent doctrine! O Locke, thou repu-
 ted sage, "hide thy diminished head!" What are all thy
 refinements, [94] thy "*metaphysical distinctions* [89,]" to
 maxims such as these!—You expressly acknowledge,
 Sir, [41] that "you think the *commercial restraint is full as*
 " *hard a law for America to live under*, as the schemes of
 " American revenue: and, if *uncompensated*, to be a condi-
 " tion of as rigorous servitude as man can be subject to.
 " But America bore it from the fundamental act of navi-
 " gation until 1764—Why? Because," you add, "*men*
 " *do bear the inevitable constitution of their original nature*
 " *with all its infirmities*." Now, that I cannot attain
 knowledge without study, or happiness without wisdom;
 that I cannot preserve my health without exercise, or my
 freedom without courage; nor penetrate with my eye the
 opaqueness of a stone, or the complicated folds of my
 neigh-

* (94) "Refining speculatists,"

neighbours heart; may possibly be all reckoned among the defects and infirmities of my "original nature:"—but that it is "the inevitable constitution" of any one man, or of any one nation, to submit to the tyranny of another, I must positively deny; as the contrary hath been long since proved by the United Provinces, and lately by the law of England, in the case of a negroe slave when brought into this free country. Nor do I in the least doubt, but that America will very shortly give a convincing refutation to this curious proposition: which, Sir, if you will review it with candour, you may possibly perceive to be *much worse than a* "metaphysical distinction," or the "refinement of a speculatist;" since it tends to *debase*, not to refine; to *confound*, and not to distinguish. Is it for man, arrogantly to lord it over his brother, to impose upon him restraints and bonds, and then to aggravate his sufferings by the insult of a proffered *compensation*!—a compensation, such alone, and such in degree, as he, the *impious imposer*, shall judge *expedient* for insuring his power and advancing his own interest? If restraint and bonds, *even thus compensated*, be not rigorous servitude, I know not what is. 'Tis not the present *suffering under*, but the being *subject to*, the power of another, which *constitutes* slavery. Give us but the slavery, and the suffering will not fail to follow in due time. Now, Sir, from *the whole of what you advance*, with regard to *the supremacy of parliament over the legislatures of the several states of America*; as well as from your express and repeated declarations of steadfastly abiding by *the minister and the system of 1766**, when parliament, in its folly, assumed a right of repealing the irrevocable laws of God, by enacting, that his majesty in parliament, of right, had power to make white men black men; to oblige the Antipodes to hear, see, and feel, by the senses of Englishmen; and to transform millions of the human species, into calves and camels;—or what is no less absurd (meaning the *right* not the *fact*) *to bind the people of the American colonies by statutes in all cases whatsoever*;—I say, from the whole of these opinions and assertions, it is but too evident, Sir, that your political compass,

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* "I honestly and solemnly declare, I have in all seasons adhered to the system of 1766," pag. 96.

pass, how true and safe soever to steer by in Britain, hath lost its rectitude when removed to America. Correct it, Sir, I beseech you, ere it be too late ; because I fear that thousands will confide in it ; and probably the first peace-making minister, availing himself of this confidence, and the general error of the people, will steer by one adjusted to the same imaginary variation ; to the inevitable distress, if not, in the end, to the shipwreck of the state. Do not, Sir, imitate the modern ministerial *dignity*, of persisting in wrong ; nor the bed-ridden parental dotage, which talks of *pap*, of leading-strings, and the rod, for that child, which, did it but retain its senses, it might perceive to be in a state of manly vigour and independence ; parent himself of a numerous offspring, lord of a mighty household, and master of immense possessions ; and yet the filial, though not the slavish ; the voluntary, not the servile, prop of its declining age and decrepitude. Lay, then, Sir, your hand upon your heart, and answer me, or rather answer to God and to America, the three following plain questions : 1. Doth not the British constitution, and the law of nature, *which may in no wise be overturned by any human constitution whatsoever* *, (malgre all the qualifications, reservation, and subtle evasions that sophistry can devise) absolutely require that the people, those at least who are proprietors of, and are thereby permanently attached to, the soil, shall *actually share* in the powers of legislation ; by giving their consent either personally or by representatives of their own choosing, *to all laws* which are to be *the rules of their actions* :—Not only those of taxation, but those equally which *limit the exercise* of executive power, which *erect national tribunals*, and which establish any other regulation (be it even of their

* This law of nature, being co-eval with mankind and dictated by God himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries, and at all times : no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this ; and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original.

their *foreign trade*,) that may affect their properties, their liberties, or their happiness in any particular :— And doth not the constitution, in requiring all this, as absolutely pronounce that, *where there is no such participation, no subjection is due?* 2. What share or participation in the powers of the British parliament is possessed by any American, *as an American?* 3. If no individual then, in America, by sharing in, be subject to, the powers of the British parliament; how can *all of them*, in their collective capacities as states and civil communities, be subject to this power? Surely that circumstance which sinketh an individual below the level of freedom, must equally debase a nation into a condition of slavery.—The “superintending power” of Great-Britain which [92] you propose her “to dispense, as from *the throne of heaven*,” perhaps I might not so strongly object to; could I be tolerably well assured, it would not in time degenerate (as human magisterial power uncontroled *bath ever done* since the beginning of the world,) into a power that the Americans would rather suppose to be dispensed from the dark council of Pandemonium; or could I be certain that it was not equally to be dreaded, as *necessarily tending* to the destruction of *our own liberties*. But, presuming, Sir, you will not become her surety in that respect, since you very prudently tell the minister [10] “you can give no security,” that *the colonists* shall not rise in their demands, upon a *concession of justice* being made them, which you esteem it infamous to withhold; I can by no means agree with you to put into her hands this weighty sceptre, for “coercing the negligent, restraining the violent, and aiding the weak and deficient, by the over-ruling plenitude of her power;” especially since you tell me in plain terms, (not, I am sure, adverting to the blasphemous nature of the expression) “this power must be *boundless*;” [93] because I verily believe, that without the other *boundless* attributes and infinite perfections of *the Deity*, to whom *alone* boundless power belongs, to direct its operations, it would infallibly bruise the head of America, and crush her into a *Sardinian servitude* *. I hope, Sir, it

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was

* Farmer's Letters,

was not at the time when you were yourself connected with a very noble person at the head of the Treasury department [56] that you first affixed to the words *British Empire*, those magnificent ideas you give us of it, page 92, 93; nor that any hope or persuasion of mind that the system of 1766, together with its framers, shall one day be restored, which attaches you so firmly to it. I hope this, Sir, from the opinion I have of the goodness of your heart, and from my natural unwillingness to believe that the man, who, besides being an assiduous and distinguished labourer in the public cause, is no less the amiable example of virtuous privacy and the charm of domestic society, can ever become so egregiously sottish, as to cast away such happiness and true glory, for aught that Mammon or Lucifer hath to offer him. Unjust as the declaratory act of 1766 was in its principle, I know not, but at that period, it might have been quietly acquiesced in by the Americans, provided our taxing schemes had not been revived; but I cannot believe, even in that case, it could have operated so contrary to the nature of things, as to have preserved concord and mutual advantages to the two countries for any considerable length of time to come; except the assumption of this unlimited power had, like the splendid titular assumptions of a Chinese Emperor, been universally considered as *mere empty words without any meaning*, and Great-Britain had *totally abstained from the smallest attempt towards an exercise of it*. These being my sentiments, I cannot but look on the passing of such an act as a most unpardonable folly. Conscious as you seem to be [87, 90,] that *the discussion* of such a question had a direct tendency to destroy, even that degree of authority (and no small one) which the blind affection and superstitious reverence of the colonies for their mother country had established, by habit and undisputed precedents, from the beginning; had it not been wiser to have totally abstained from starting it at all; and to have invariably acted towards the colonies, as we should have done towards states that knew full well, and jealously maintained, their independency of us; but yet of whose fidelity towards us we were well assured, by an unexampled national attachment and union of interests, together

gether with all the influences of one common language, religion, and constitution ; the same manners, customs, and sentiments ? Had we thus, *in the year 1766*, sagaciously avoided “ going into the distinction of rights, “ and attempting to mark their boundaries [89] ; ” (that is, on the part of the poor Americans ; for the rights of Great-Britain *we modestly declared to be boundless* ;) we had done well ; we had done wisely. It was your own minister, Mr. Burke, it was Lord Rockingham, and possibly, Sir, advised by yourself, who, in a more especial manner, brought into discussion these “ metaphysical distinctions ; ” who thus “ intemperately, unwisely, fatally sophisticated and poisoned the very source of government,” and attempted “ to argue the colonies into “ slavery : ” and that too, by what court reasoners seem to plume themselves upon as a very “ subtle deduction, “ from the unlimited and illimitable nature of supreme sovereignty ; ” though in truth it is a dogma fit only to pass in the sublime Divan, or from the infallible lips of his holiness, towards Turkish and Italian toe-kissers and lickers of the dust ; whereas his lordship’s doctrine of ‘ binding in all cases whatsoever,’ was preached to an intelligent and free people, having legislatures of their own, and who owed *not the smallest obedience whatever* to such sovereignty. To suppose that king, lords, and the house of commons for the time being, conjointly have authority to do any wrong or injury to the rest of the state, is as ridiculous as to admit, that the *head* and *hand* may contrive and execute any mischief or mutilations upon the rest of the body. Nor, until some great christian casuist hath demonstrated suicide to be justifiable, shall we ever be brought to acquiesce in the absurd, though very solemn decision of the learned Judge Hale, and recited, with no small parade, as an indubitable authority by his more learned brother Blackstone, in his Com. p. 161. in order to prove that one’s *hand* may plunge a dagger into one’s *heart*, or one’s *head* by the denying of nourishment, may starve one’s *body* to death ; and for this wise and wonderful reason that the heart and the body cannot help themselves.— Here indeed my allusion fails me ; as their reasoning, had they recollected how many *supreme sovereigns* have been punished

punished for their "mis-government *," did them: and I trust that *the body* of the people of these free kingdoms, *the heart* and the rest of *the faithful members*, will either restrain or punish *that hand* or *that head* which shall ever conspire or attempt any thing against its life or well-being. This *illimitability* may be an ingenious *law fiction*, and well calculated, as such, to answer certain useful purposes in dispatching the business of the law courts: but when offered to our understandings for a *fact*, it must be rejected with disdain as a *most abominable dogma*; either the legitimate child of ignorance or a cunning bastard of tyranny, but certainly the natural parent of slavery. I would therefore beg leave to propose, that in the next edition of your speech, there be made to every proposition stating "the illimitable nature of supreme sovereignty," the small addition of these three words, 'to do good,' by way of amendment; which, from a fallacy and a treasonable assertion, will convert it into a truth, and a constitutional maxim. Had these "subtle deductions," in favour of the "boundless power" of parliament, been the "metaphysical distinctions" you meant, p. 89, I should most heartily have accorded with you in "hating the very sound of them:" but when the enormous, the odious pretensions of the Declaratory Act, preceded and succeeded by a train of grievous oppressions under other administrations, had roused the unmindful colonists and their English friends to an exertion of their thinking faculties, in order to shew the just distinctions of the sacred rights of human nature, and to mark their boundaries, I should not have expected from any, but the sophistical advocates of tyranny, a condemnation of such a proceeding; as I esteem it a most generous task, and one of the most indubitable marks of genuine patriotism. Milton and Locke were respectively stigmatized, by the tools of despotism, as "refining speculatists;" and Sydney paid the forfeit of his blood for opposing, to the absurd and impious dogmas of Filmer, (the champion of *illimitable sovereignty and powers for binding in all cases whatsoever*,) his "metaphysical distinctions:" but posterity hath done them all justice. Whateyer might have been the prospects of
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* Comment. p. 161.

advantage in the year 1766, from establishing an unjust sovereignty over America, it is evident, that even then, the actual exercise of it would have been scarcely practicable with the most extreme caution and tenderness: but now, in the year 1775, after all that hath passed during nine irritating years to awaken the sleeping colonists, and to exasperate them to the last degree their patience is capable of bearing; but *now*, I say, the attempt is a flight of madness not to be accounted for, but from an apprehension that God sees it is high time to humble our pride, by leaving it to baffle its own vicious designs by its folly; or, for the sins of the nation, is pleased to suffer it, by insatiation, to cast itself headlong into destruction. America may now be considered, as an industrious and intelligent youth just arriving at man's estate; who, having cheerfully served a long *apprenticeship* under us, must now, *if not admitted into partnership*, become our rival in trade. Like other juniors, *he will be content* to share the profits in a subordinate degree, proportioned to the inferiority of his capital and connections; but he will acknowledge no other dependence; he will no longer be our bond-servant. Too well doth he remember the hardships he hath suffered in our service, to enter into new indentures of servitude, now that his legal term is drawing towards its expiration. Indeed, had we been possessed of any portion of that wisdom which belongeth to "the children of this world," we might, for a long time to come, have kept him in ignorance of this secret; his indentures being in our own keeping, and he being easily satisfied with whatever interpretation of them we thought fit to make: until, swelling with the flatulent ideas of our own dignity and importance; debauched and impoverished by luxury and extravagance; we imposed upon him too severe a drudgery, and began to starve and to scourge him rather too unmercifully. By this folly we have literally scourged him into a necessity of asserting his independency, for we have driven him, not only from his relaxations and play, but from his work; and forced him to deny himself even common repose, in order to seek in the schools for forms of language, in which to express his sense of our ill usage, and the natural feelings of his soul, which taught him to
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know that there was something incompatible, between our treatment of him and what he was intitled to. Nor hath he sought in vain: but, supported in his own mind by a consciousness of his just rights, and justified by "the refinements" of those "speculatists," Locke, Milton, and Sydney: and by the "metaphysical distinctions" which the volume of nature hath unfolded to his own researches, he is now ready, Sir, in your own expressive words, to "cast your sovereignty in your face." Nay, the American is become both by precept and example your most faithful monitor, your best instructor, in the only possible means of preserving your own liberties; and of recovering from that state of corruption, of which the constitution is sick at heart; by maintaining his own rights on the undeniable principles of truth and justice; opposing tyranny with a manly temper, firmness and dignity; and, above all, by intrusting the guardianship of them to *unplaced, unpensioned, and uncorrupted delegates*. Doth it not behove us then, either as "children of this world," or as "children of light," no longer to injure or insult him with the exercise, or the claim, of any power incompatible with his absolute liberty, his perfect freedom? Your "subordinate liberty," take my word for it, (and I hope I am not a "refining speculatist," as I am certain I am no "factious demagogue,") will not now be thought by him, "enough for the ease and happiness of man;" [94] because the *reserved part* is to be withheld from him by injustice and force; and lodged in the very hands which do him this wrong; and therefore not very fit to be intrusted with so sacred a deposit. No, Sir, he will demand perfect freedom,—British freedom—that very freedom you yourself enjoy, and which alone is the legitimate issue of the *British constitution*: he will be content with nothing short of a *participation in that power* which frames *all the laws* he is to be subject to as the rule of his actions.—I beg pardon, Sir;—my zeal in the cause of America, and the irresistible impressions of justice on my mind, have carried me one step too far: for, such is the moderation of America, such her desire to "seek peace and ensue it," that she tells you, in her 4th Resolve in Congress, that "from the necessity of the case, and a regard to the mutual
" interests

“ interests of both countries, she *cheerfully consents* to the
 “ operation of such acts of the British parliament, as are
 “ bona fide, restrained to the regulation of her external
 “ commerce, *for the purpose* of securing the commercial
 “ advantages of the whole empire to *the mother country*.”

Here, Sir, she shews that no contemptuous slights nor injuries; not a ten-years series of oppression and insult; nor even the sight of the uplifted British axe aimed directly at the root of her liberties, can provoke her to forego her rivetted attachment to this country. This single instance of her unabated affection, her voluntary humiliation and subserviency to the welfare of the parent state, effectually gives the lie to the charge of ingratitude, and the design of breaking through all the commercial restraints which secure us the monopoly of her trade; that have been so loudly and so indefatigably trumpeted forth by the diabolical agents of tyranny, and have exercised so many prostitute pens. This proves that, anxious and irritated as she is, it is pure justice and wisdom, not resentment, by which she is actuated: and in this it is that she confirms, under her own hand and seal, what I undertook to engage for on her part, when last spring I proposed a *parliamentary declaration of her independency*, and the forming with her an *effectual union of interests*, by means of a *league*, in which she should be a *free, voluntary contracting party*. These are my words: “ Not being able to pay Great-
 “ Britain in subsidies of ready money for her protection
 “ and friendship, they (the American states) will grant
 “ her an equivalent in exclusive trade *.”—What more, in the name of common sense would we have?—Will nothing satisfy us, but her liberties at our feet?—Shall we “ wade up to the eyes in blood” for only *the chance* of the shadow, when she offers us the substance, the reality?—Will the high-sounding word *sovereignty*, or millions of sterling gold, best fill the treasury and support the dignity of Great-Britain? Possibly I may be somewhat singular in opinion; but I cannot help being much inclined to consider the tyranny and perverseness of administration towards America for ten years past, as one of those

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* American Independence the interest and glory of Great-Britain, p. 66.

gracious and benevolent dispensations of Providence towards a chosen people, which, though a present calamity, is nevertheless, according to the established order of things, a necessary one; and productive of great, solid and lasting blessings in future. Such is the imperfection of our nature, that for the most part, and nationally considered, we are incapable of understanding, of valuing or enjoying, any state of extraordinary prosperity and happiness, that hath not been preceded by one of adversity; by a comparison with which we can estimate its felicities. In order *to enjoy*, we must not merely *possess*: but it is requisite that our minds, by activity and exercise, perceive all the *causes, connections, relations and dependencies* of that which we possess; the noble faculties of our souls must be called forth by *trials, hardships, and struggles; losses, disappointments and dangers*, together with every species of discipline which, in this state of probation, is necessary to the perfecting of virtue. Had not God, in his paternal anger, permitted this chosen nation to have been visited by the detested race of Stewarts and a long afflicting civil war, 'tis certain the succeeding chain of events had not taken place: and 'tis more than probable, that the seeds of dissolution which lay lurking in the bowels of the state before their advancement to the throne, had they been nourished by an uninterrupted calm and the treacherous sunshine of apparent prosperity, would long since have spread their poison to the immediate sources of life, and destroyed the constitution. But it was *that dreadful night of tempest and darkness, that season of severe adversity*, which roused the genius and spirit of the nation; and to which we were indebted for the succeeding beauty and vigour of the constitution, by purging off the greater part of those foul impurities and seeds of death. Heaven grant that its now fading bloom and failing strength, those sure symptoms of inward disease, may be again restored ere it be too late!

— It was, I say, during *the very term* of that visitation of God's anger, that he was providing for the future unparalleled felicities of this nation; and literally causing good to grow out of evil, by raising up within that period those great and excellent men, who, feeling the feverish and alarming state of the times, contemplating the scene

around them, and steering by the compass of the *British* constitution, have by their writings done more service to the cause of liberty and the rights of mankind, than ever had been done before by all the boasted patriots of Greece and Rome, together with those of every other nation in the world collectively.—As those unhappy times produced *Sydneys*, *Lockes* and *Miltons*; so we find the present, daily bringing forth *Shipleys*, *Dickenfons*, and many other “truly noble, honourable, and patriotic advocates of civil and religious liberty, who generously and powerfully espouse and defend the cause of America, both in and out of parliament *.” I do not therefore repine at the distressful contest which hath so long existed between these kingdoms and the colonies, since by God’s mercy it hath as yet been bloodless; and since, still relying on the goodness of his Providence, I trust it will terminate in adjusting their true, their natural and most beneficial relation to each other, which is that of *an independent friendship and alliance*; in perpetuating their harmony; and in radically curing those latent distempers, which might otherwise have proved fatal to the liberties of both. Such I think no man of foresight can doubt would have been the sad event, had either the supineness of America, or the cunning moderation of the ministers of Great-Britain, kept her in what you call [87] “her old, her strong, her tenable position,” long enough to have fixt her immoveably on that “sure ground,” on whose solid basis her machines once fixed, she might, as you inform her, “have drawn worlds towards her.” But worlds, Sir, are not to be drawn towards each other, or fettered with chains and unnatural bonds, but to their mutual destruction. Their general well-being; and the benefits reciprocally to be derived, from light and genial warmth reflected on each other respectively, are only to be preserved by their keeping their appointed distances, by moving each in its own orbit, and by being kept from flying off from their centers into chaos, by the sweet influences of *attraction*, that best, that universal, that stupendous law of nature, by which the material, the moral and the divine worlds are all upheld and preserved in harmony. Trusting, as I say, that

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* Concluding resolve of the congress.

our present contest will finally terminate in the independency of America, and stop us short in the mad career of dominion; that it will teach us to know that any *imperial possession* * beyond the British seas, except a few scattered islands, factories and forts for the ends of trade, would ever be a mill-stone at the neck of the constitution; in as much as it would encumber it with extrinsecal powers it could not manage, or exert but in a way inimicable to internal health; and as it would most obviously add enormous weight to court influence; against which, the other balancing powers are already little more than a feather; as the unavailing wisdom and eloquence of yourself and others, in both houses of parliament, must long since have convinced you; I cannot but congratulate with my country on the very error of Mr. Grenville, which hath been thought so prolifick of mischief, and kiss with reverence the rod of our chastisement. A Hercules with many bodies under one head, would have been an impotent, unwieldy monster; not an invincible hero and demi-god: — it would have been a more preposterous fiction, than that of the hydra with many heads to one body. But a monster with a multitude of bodies, *all of which* except one are feigned to be three thousand miles from its head, was a monster reserved for an abortive conception in the wild imagination of modern policy in its delirious reveries. Believe me, Sir, there is no sterling sense in the words, “*British Empire*,” when signifying *unbounded* dominion with *unbounded* power over the immeasurable space of the North American Continent; and that, so applied, they are no better than ‘sounding brags or a tinkling ‘symbal,’ to charm a proud, deluded nation to its ruin. In the warmth of a senatorial debate, and the rapid flow of your imagination, which resembles the Amazonian torrent, the collected force of ten thousand streams, breaking irresistibly a glorious inroad through the frontier of the vast Atlantic, and scornfully beating back his embattled waves, it might indeed have been allowed you to have crayoned out for Great-Britain a fanciful “*imperial coa-*”
 “*rafter*; in which, as from the throne of heaven, she
 “should superintend all the several inferior legislatures
 “ of

* American Independence, p. 23.

“ of America; guiding and controlling, without annihilating any;—coercing the negligent, restraining the violent, and aiding the weak and deficient, by the over-ruling plenitude of her *boundless* power; and when her requisitions were not implicitly obeyed, saying to the delinquents,—tax yourselves for the common supply, or *parliament will do it for you* ;” [92]—all this, I say, as well as to pass by “ nice distinctions,” and to trespass a little on the “ boundaries of right,” might have been very allowable, while flying before the wind on the flood-tide of eloquence, and by way of declamation; but when you coolly, and deliberately, sat down to *write* for the instruction of the public; when it was of the last importance not to give currency to any opinions; not to excite any vain, proud, ambitious and misleading passions in the people; nor to afford any countenance for the ministerial tyranny you profess to oppose; and which is all supported on *the very principle you admit*, and, *if it be admitted*, is clearly *justifiable*, since *legal authority with boundless power*, if indeed it may be supplicated, may in no wise be withstood:—when, I say you acted with this deliberation, surely, Sir, you ought to have omitted, in your transcript all such erroneous, fallacious and fatal doctrines!

That the “ imperial *rights* of Great-Britain as stated in the declaratory act of 1766, and the privileges which the colonists ought to enjoy are just the most reconcilable things in the world,” you tell us indeed in so many words [92]; and indeed, Sir, to do you justice, you also, by the aid of your *heavenly* allusion, reconcile them very glibly to your own imagination, and, I have no doubt, to the entire satisfaction of administration. While Lewis the XIVth was intoxicated with the drunken fancy of universal monarchy, his courtiers did not fail to satisfy him that “ the *imperial rights*” of France and “ the privileges which the dependent states of Europe *ought to enjoy* (wondrous condescension!) were just the “ most reconcilable things in the world:” and that he had an undoubted right, clear as that two and two make four, “ to superintend, to guide, and control them, as “ from the throne of heaven;” though they humbly hoped

hoped his *divine* Majesty would not in his displeasure "annihilate any of them." Yet, Sir, there unluckily remains one omission, one small defect in your argument, which the "refining speculatist" and the "metaphysician," nay I fear even *the dull American*, will never be able to get over:—you have forgot the *proof* of your proposition; you have totally omitted the *legality*, the *moral rectitude* of your well-sounding proposal. These are considerations, trifling enough, God knows, in the opinions of some statesmen; but they are nevertheless by a free people, thought *absolutely necessary* to be attended to, before obedience and authority can be reconciled. Thanks, Sir, to the native honesty of your heart, which, though it incautiously suffered you to pronounce the aforesaid words, "imperial rights of Great-Britain," hath kept you uniformly from attempting to explain them; or in any than this and other equivalent and synonymous expressions throughout your whole speech, from so much as *hinting* at their existence: nay you have given hints, and broad ones too, that she *hath not* these rights, if her title-deeds come to be well perused and examined into; or why should she have any reason to "apprehend" that any "metaphysical process" whatever, could "argue her out of her whole authority?" [87] Why admonish her to "reason not at all?"—to oppose "*policy and practice to truth and justice*?"—Besides, you remark [87, 88.] that "the distinction of *internal and external duties*," or taxes, "is as nothing with regard to *right*;" in which, Sir, you say most justly; and perfectly agree with me when I assert that, "to acknowledge their independency, "and to form with them a friendly league, is therefore "the only method, *on the principles of equity*, of laying "them under restrictions in trade and manufactures, for "the exclusive advantage of their protectors; but continuing to impose these restrictions by *our own authority*, "and by *force*, as it deeply affects them in their property, "by *preventing money coming into their pockets*, (which is "very nearly allied, when done unjustly, to *taking it out of their pockets without their consent*) is undoubtedly tyrannical*." And, again; [89] interrogating the minister,

* American Independence, p. 77.

nister, you say—"Do you mean to tax America, and
 "to draw a productive revenue from thence? If you do;
 "speak out:—If you *murder*—rob! If you *kill*; take
 "possession: and do not appear in the character of,
 "madmen as well as *assassins*." Here again, Sir, I in-
 tirely agree with you, that taxing where no revenue is to
 be got, is *madness*; that taxing those who are unrepres-
 ented, is *robbing*; and that they who assume legislative
 authority where there is no right, are *murderers* and
assassins; if it be true that whosoever looketh on a woman
 to lust after her, is indeed an *adulterer*; as upon divine
 authority we are informed he is; (*Matt. iv. 28.*) and
 moreover, that to claim a "*boundless power*," is a pre-
 sumptuous invasion, an impious usurpation on the prero-
 gative of *the Omnipotent*. Thanks, once more, to "the
 "abundance of your heart out of which your mouth
 "speaketh," for these honest acknowledgments, that
 Great-Britain, *on your own principles*, and *according to*
your own system of 1766, is at present no better than a
murderous assassin. You may see then, Sir, clearly enough,
 "what is to become of the declaratory act asserting the
 "entireness of British legislative authority." [92] It
 ought to be sacrificed to justice, wisdom, and concord.
 As for those men who are at once base enough to assert
 in direct terms, and silly enough to attempt to demon-
 strate, that subjection and tyranny are not only reconcil-
 able but right; to offer them conviction would be casting
 pearls before swine; or I would beg leave, in order to
 save them the trouble of turning over the folios of the
 Sydney of the last century, to refer them to three letters of
 his more concise name-sake, which I read, with infinite
 pleasure and the highest esteem for the honest author, in the
 Gazetteer of *Jan. the 5th and 26th*, and *Feb 23d*: but,
 Sir, to your attentive perusal I will recommend them; and
 request you also to review once more what myself, the feeblest
 advocate in the cause of liberty, and others have advanced
 in favour of American Independence;—or rather, Sir, with
 candour and uprightness consult your own very superior
 understanding and feeling heart. Your serious reflec-
 tion, Sir, must convince you of your error: and that
 all your arguments, without exception, in favour of

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Great-Britain's sovereignty, are nothing better than a flimsy string of sophisms—a mere rhetorical rope of sand which, not to fear that it might dissolve like a morning vapour as you stretched it across the wide Atlantic, would assuredly prove no more powerful, nor fit to “*bind America in all cases whatsoever,*” than the well-twisted wreath ascending from the profound politician's solemn pipe. And would you, Sir, if it were possible, by contributing towards the foundations of such a power, “stand answerable to God for embracing a system that tends to the destruction of some of the very best and fairest of his works?” [96.]

Reflect then, Sir, for heaven's sake!—and be consistent in your pleadings for the colonists. When there shall no longer appear in your politicks any leaven of *subordination* to sour their “liberty;” any reservations whatever of imperial rights, in diminution of the privileges of nature; any sophistical arguments concerning requisitions, which, in spite of every plausible pretext, involve in them the claims of an inadmissible arbitrary power; or any unjust, because *imposed*, restrictions on their freedom;—but you shall become, Sir, their generous advocate, and demand for them a truly British liberty, that liberty which you yourself enjoy; then, Sir, you will be their friend indeed; then, Sir, every good man will give you praise; and I will venture to foretel that your eloquence, thus breathing pure truth, wisdom and patriotism, will then be attended with the powers of persuasion, and obtain a sure ascendancy over many minds that are now unmoved by it. It will no longer be stopped by the closing valves of suspicion, and held back as a tuneful song to please the ear; but will be allowed a free passage to the heart, and received there as a cordial, invigorating balm; congenial with all its generous feelings, its noblest emotions, its dearest hopes. How shall you see to remove the beam from the ministerial eye, without first at least plucking out the *mote* from your own!—I conjure you then, Sir; you, who are not wont to deal in sophistry, or to elude the force of truth by subtlety, subterfuge, or wilful deafness; you, whose penetrating genius hath enlarged the bounds of true

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true science ; whose luminous eloquence is dreaded as the detector of falsehood and the certain foe of all dishonest darkness ; you, who have greatly distinguished yourself as a friend to the British constitution ; you, who are not amongst the wise ones who wear morality as a cloak, nor the wits who scoff at religion and all its sacred obligations ; you, Sir, I conjure by all these considerations, to reflect seriously on what, with the honest freedom which becomes every man who hath the public good at heart, I have pointed out to you ; and then obey the truth-speaking dictates of that monitor which God hath given you for your moral guide. I want you not, Sir, to break through your attachment to Lord Rockingham ; or to dissolve any honourable connection that may enable you to serve your country the more effectually. But let it be apparent that it is your country, and not a party, you mean to serve ; that you are truly and wholly actuated by public spirit, and not by private interest. Flatter no man's weakness ; defend no man's errors ; minister to no man's ambition, at your country's expence. Lay aside every party prejudice, and every ill-founded system ; especially that which gave birth to the tyrannical and absurd declaratory act of 1766. Prove yourself, by purity of principle and consistency of conduct, to be unbiassed, uninfluenced and independent : and leave us not to lament that faction and corruption are at the bottom of every pretence of serving the deserted and deluded public ; and to repeat, with a melancholy, a mournful emphasis ; " Cæsar hath friends ; and Pompey hath friends : but none are friends to Rome."

I have repeatedly denied the legality, as we all deny the expediency, of the late and present British system of American government : and the fields of allusion are well-nigh exhausted in order to illustrate these truths. There are however a few allusions more, which, if they have been made use of, I do not remember to have observed. But before I proceed to them, let me remark, that when we speak of Great-Britain and America as *mother* and *daughter*, it is rather a delusion than an allusion as it tends to obscure, not to illustrate their real relation to each other. For 'tis not the *country* of the new world,

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brought as it were into existence by late discovery, the inanimate *earth*, the *trees*, the *stocks* and *stones*, which in old England are the objects of our thoughts when we dispute about the government of it; but it is the *people*, the inhabitants of that new world, which are, or ought to be, the objects concerning which we reason. Now it is evident that the present generation in this same old England, can with no propriety be esteemed the parents of the present generation in America; and therefore are not intitled, on that plea, to any authority over them. It is evident also, that their true relation by blood, is the same as that of two descendants from the same family stock; whose respective progenitors long since separated, and branched into two distinct families. We may therefore with the strictest propriety, and with a clear illustration of the principles I maintain, consider Great-Britain (the *nation*, not the *country*; the *people*, not the *soil*;) as the male descendant, representative, and heir, of the elder, while we regard America as the blooming heirs, of the younger branch. How lovely, how desirable an object of enjoyment to Great-Britain, let every one judge! But shall he, like an Eastern despot, doom her to a splendid wretchedness in his seraglio; never more to hold a social commerce with any but her hated lord; nor to taste the sweets, the pure delights of liberty; and though mocked with the soothing title of Sultana, knowing too well she is no better than the slave of his lustful appetites? Or, like a still worse Barbarian, a very banditti ruffian, unmoved at her tears and intreaties, and deaf to her cries, shall he brutishly think to strike her to the earth, and while deprived of the powers of resistance, to become her impious ravisher? But let him not forget, that she hath a noble and indignant soul; and that the poignard, with which she hath been taught to arm herself, was he to make the foul attempt, might possibly, in the moment of her despair, be plunged with a deep and deadly stab into his guilty heart, and preserve her honour unviolated.—No!—"Better counsels shall guide him."—Recovering from the state of inebriation, in which the base sycophants who fed his pride, and the vile pandars of his unlawful pleasures, had artfully kept

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this noble youth, for their own wicked purposes; and with a stern, majestic countenance, commanding them from his presence; he shall view with his own eyes the lovely virgin; and recollecting their mutual tenderness from earliest infancy, and the inseparable nature of their interests; acknowledging her native charms, and all her intrinsic worth; his fierceness in a moment shall melt into fondness; when, leaving her to her just liberty and rightful independency, he shall court her to his embrace with a manly and generous frankness; with sincere love, honour and respect: while she, wiping away the last falling tear, and giving to the winds all the anxieties with which his lately estranged affections had filled her aching bosom, all her present suspicions, all her future fears and apprehensions, shall, with angelic loveliness and heart-felt rapture, fly into his protecting arms; when instantly the sacred hymeneal rites and plighted vows shall seal between them an indissoluble union. An union agreeable to nature, to justice, and to freedom; and surely the fittest that can be imagined for promoting their mutual interests! The nuptial *contract*, with the *voluntary consent* of America; and not a *British statute*, doing violence to justice and her inclinations must be the Declaratory Act to limit their reciprocal duties, and the respective degrees of control and subordination necessary between them. But though I propose that America shall become the *wife* of Great-Britain, be it remembered, that I do not mean she shall therefore *obey* his arbitrary will, nor that he shall have a direct power to *rule over her*: because she hath hitherto always behaved towards him as an affectionate kinswoman, rendering him every good office in her power; and because she cannot yet, the nuptials not being solemnized, have forfeited that natural independency which God hath given her, by listening to the suggestions of the devil, and causing her husband's ruin, as Eve did that of Adam; and for which alone it was, that she was made subject to his will, by the *curse* of obedience. America therefore, *not* being subject to this curse, will be entitled to all the benefits of marriage at its original institution; when God in his bounty bestowed "the dominion and property in and

“ over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and every thing on the face of the earth upon *husband and wife jointly*,” Gen. i. 28, 29. Nor, prior to the curse, did he make any distinction between them, but what he hath also made between Great-Britain and America. The former was prior in existence, and hath superior wisdom and strength; not for the purpose of tyrannic rule, but of guidance and protection: the latter is “ an help meet for him;” not in the abject condition of a slave, but in that of a loving, respectful, and prudent wife, a faithful friend, a social companion. And herein are laid, by the laws of nature, the true foundations for all the superior influence and control that is proper or desirable for the husband; and in which America, as a dutiful and faithful wife, will ever acquiesce with pleasure. Let Great-Britain then say; “ This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called *British America*, because she was taken out of *Britain*: and therefore I will leave father and mother, and will cleave unto my wife; and we will be one flesh,” Gen. ii. 23, 24. As you so frequently, Sir, resort to holy writ, as to the genuine source of the *sublime and beautiful*, you will not, I flatter myself, be displeased with these references to it; nor to the following quotation, with which I shall close this letter: nor will the very singular, and most remarkable aptness with which it may be applied to *British America*, of whom, as the wife of Great-Britain, it might well pass for a prophecy, be lost upon you. “ Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies (a). The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her; so that he shall have no need of spoil (b). She will do him good and not evil all the days of his life. She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchant-ships; she bringeth

(a) As *British America* is in value far above Spanish and Portuguese America, abounding with precious stones and metals.

(b) We had better cultivate our laborious North American commerce, than debauch and corrupt ourselves with the spoils of the East.

“ bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it
 “ is yet night, and giveth meat to her household and a
 “ portion to her maidens. She considereth a field and
 “ buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth
 “ a vineyard (c). She girdeth her loins with strength,
 “ and strengtheneth her arms (d). She perceiveth that
 “ her merchandize is good (e): her candle goeth not
 “ out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle,
 “ and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out
 “ her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her
 “ hands to the needy (f). She is not afraid of the
 “ snow for her household; for all her household are
 “ clothed with double garments (g). She maketh her-
 “ self coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk (h) and
 “ purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when
 “ he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh
 “ fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles (i)
 “ unto the merchant. Strength and honour are her
 “ clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She
 “ openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue
 “ is the law of kindness (k). She looketh well to the
 “ ways of her household (l); and eateth not the bread
 “ of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed;
 “ her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daugh-
 “ ters have done virtuously (m), and have gotten riches;
 “ but thou excellest them all,” *Prov. xxxi.*

It

(c) The cultivation of vines hath been attended to for some years in North America.

(d) Her militia is numerous and well disciplined.

(e) The non-importation agreements shew this.

(f) She feedeth and cloatheth thousands of our poor manufacturers.

(g) See the margin to the text.

(h) The southern provinces of Georgia and the Carolinas produce fine silk.

(i) Belts of wampum.

(k) Journal of the Proceedings of the Congress.

(l) She has not a court-kalendar quite so well filled with the names of placemen and pensioners as Great-Britain.

(m) See the margin to the text.

(30)

It is with great respect, and a sincere desire that you may both merit and attain the name of patriot, that greatest of all earthly appellations, regal and imperial titles not excepted, that I subscribe myself,

SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

CONSTITUTIO.



P O S T S C R I P T.

April, 1775.

ALTHOUGH the foregoing parts of this work were all written with an earnest desire to serve the public, yet they have not been published with an expectation of their being either well received or much attended to, by those to whom they were immediately addressed:—until matters between Great-Britain and her colonies should, through the rashness of our counsels, be brought to extremities; and that, no longer having choice in our power, we should be reduced to act from necessity alone. Perhaps there hath seldom been a cause less popular in this country, nor one that ought to have been more so, than that which the writer hath endeavoured to plead. That our colonies have a right to be independent, is a conclusion which I am well persuaded must inevitably result from the question; whenever discussed with temper and patience, and with a liberal, candid and honest turn of mind. Of the truth of this observation I can aver, in the most solemn manner, that I have had personal experience; and that too, in instances where the persons entered into the enquiry under the common prejudices of Britons in favour of the British sovereignty over them. It was once my own prejudice. Like the rest of my countrymen not immediately concerned in the government, I had never reflected deeply on the subject; nor indeed had the new matter with which it abounded, been ever treated of and committed to books. But the cries of America pierced my ears, and her complaints sunk into my heart. I was moved, and I determined to try the cause of this

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appellant

appellant in my own breast. I found it a good one, and that she was really much aggrieved. The respondent denied not the facts; but attempted to justify them. To this end he produced a large collection of charters, statutes and precedents, as the authorities upon which he had acted. ‘Don’t these,’ says he, ‘remove every doubt? Don’t they prove that I have a right to impose according to my sovereign will and pleasure, burthens and services, restraints and regulations upon this discontented ungrateful wretch? That I have a power in short “to bind her in all cases whatsoever *?”—And bind her I will.—Is not this law? and is not law justice?—Can any thing be plainer?’—‘Alas,’ replied she, ‘those are the laws of *your* country, not of *mine*. My legislators had no share in making them. And those bonds which you produce against me I never signed: how then, *in any case*, can they bind me? Much less can they bind me in all cases whatsoever.—These very writings, putting in force against me all my wrongs, are what I have most reason to complain of. They were all dictated, and signed and sealed by *you alone*: how then can they constitute a reciprocal engagement between us? How can the sole act of one party lay another under an obligation? And besides, I have from time to time, as my sufferings or my apprehensions prompted me, and in the most humble manner, pleaded, petitioned, appealed and remonstrated against their unkindness, severity, injustice and cruelty; but all to no purpose. And they are now become so abominably tyrannical, so totally devoid of humanity, that they are absolutely intolerable: and rather than degrade myself below the dignity of my nature by submitting to them, I am reduced to the necessity of open resistance †:—and I must add too, that

* Declaratory Act.

† Mr. Bull, in his speech on the third reading of the American Restraining Bill, as printed in the Public Ledger of the 7th of April, 1775, says as follows:

“ Mr. SPEAKER,

“ I shall take up but very little of the time of the house; I will only mention some *facts* relating to one very important article,

‘ that I am determined to endure, even unto death, rather than shamefully submit to wear the chains intended
‘ me.

article, because it has been the occasion of the unhappy disputes with, and the violent persecution of, the Americans. I mean the article of *tea*.

“ At the time the East-India Company had in contemplation the sending a quantity of tea to different parts of Europe as well as to America, and to apply to parliament for an act for that purpose, I had the honour to be called upon for my opinion of the measure by a very respectable person in the direction of the East-India Company, whose name I am ready to mention, if called upon by the house.

“ My opinion then was, and I still think it not ill-founded, that the scheme was so extravagantly wild, that it was impossible it should ever be carried into execution ; but if it could, it would *injure*, not benefit, the company, as they could not send their tea to any market where it would bring so good a price as at home. Besides, it would be an act of great injustice to the merchants here, who have always been used to buy for exportation at their sales. As to sending tea to America, from a knowledge of their disposition, the gentleman was informed they would not receive it ; they would look upon it as sent there, not to *serve* them but to ensnare them ; they would be exceedingly irritated ; they would most certainly destroy it.”

Then after going through a very perspicuous and satisfactory detail, in order to prove his positions, he thus concludes :

“ I will not trouble the house with any observations on these *facts* ; but I own I cannot be brought to believe that the tea was sent to Boston to raise money for the company, to get rid of their load of tea, or to prevent smuggling, because each of those salutary ends might have been answered without injustice, or offence to any individual.

“ The purpose for which the tea was sent to America, and the consequences, are evident now to every man’s understanding.

“ For these reasons, amongst others very forcible and important, which have been mentioned in this house, I hitherto *have*, and shall *continue*, to the utmost of my power, to *support* the *Americans*, thus *injured* and *oppressed* by the cruel and vindictive measures of an administration, whose whole conduct breathes the spirit of—*persecution* and *popery*.”

See also the notes to the ninth Letter, justifying the destruction of the tea at Boston.

' me.—But it is with reluctance and with grief of heart
 ' I utter this declaration. 'Tis an overflowing of anxiety
 ' and anguish of soul. 'Tis not the language of revenge :
 ' for in spite of your injustice and barbarity, I cannot but
 ' recollect with fondness the time when, as kinsfolks and
 ' friends we were united by the closest, the strictest and
 ' most delightful ties of love and mutual benefits. My
 ' heart bleeds at the recollection; and at this moment I
 ' would submit to any hardship or restraint short of the
 ' base condition of a slave, in order to be reconciled to
 ' my mistaken and hard hearted persecutor, and to be
 ' restored to his once-friendly arms.' ' This is all mighty
 ' well,' rejoins the respondent; ' but I thought thou hadst
 ' known me better than to think of talking me out of my
 ' purpose. I have shewn thee the law † I have told thee my
 ' right.—I will have the whole of it: I will not abate an
 ' iota.—Silence then to thy saucy tongue! I equally de-
 ' spise thy flatteries and thy threats. Is it not written in
 ' the law, that, " of right I have power to bind thee?"
 ' I have bound thee " from the beginning *;" and I will
 ' bind thee still. In contempt of thy vain struggles, I
 ' tell thee, ingrate! " I will have my bond †;" or thy
 ' blood shall pay the forfeit.'—But a little patience, and
 temper, good Sir, said I: ought you not first to *prove the*
right you had to make such a law, before you plead its autho-
 rity? It would be greatly for the advantage of your cause,
 would you but condescend to *demonstrate this single propo-
 sition* by fair argument. Nay indeed, such a demonstra-
 tion would at once determine the cause in your favour.—
 ' What! exclaims the lordly respondent, prove, argue
 ' and demonstrate! My honour, my dignity forbid!—
 ' No—that nonsense is the frivolous business of " the
 ' " schools ‡," and to them I leave it.—Here are my proofs;
 ' —here are my arguments and demonstrations.' Pardon
 me, Sir, replied I, all that is only paper and parchment
 —except there were *two* contracting parties, which there
 were not; and except they be all signed and sealed *inter-
 changeably*, upon equitable conditions, mutually and re-
 ciprocally

* Burke's Speech, pag. 89.

† Shylock.

‡ Burke's Speech, pag. 90.

ciprocally advantageous and obligatory, and binding upon both parties; which all the world knows *they are not*. There is a certain constitutional maxim, which says, that a *quid pro quo* is indispensibly requisite for giving validity and obligatory virtue to any and to *every* contract between two parties, otherwise it is *nullus pactus*, a void covenant. All these deeds are, to be sure, legible enough; and sure enough also, have for their contents what you are pleased to recite;—the writing is very fair, and they bear plenty of seals and signatures, royal and official:—"Be it enacted," and other binding forms, stand in their accustomed places; and they wear withal, to say truth, a consequential and respectable appearance. But this appearance alone will not be sufficient for your purpose. If, as the appellant urged, and as indeed you boast, they were all of your own fabricating and imposing, this alone, were they even unexceptionable in their conditions, renders them absolutely nugatory. But if, besides this, many of them are totally subversive of justice and equity, utterly repugnant to the law of nature, and shocking to humanity, as upon the very face of them appears, how, Sir, can you forget what is due to your own character, and so far depart from all that is right and respectable, as to plead, any longer, acts which are not only null and void for want of the essential principles of validity, but specifically criminal; and which it would be equally criminal not to oppose and resist! Besides, Sir, I fear that, should you remove this cause once more, and put it at issue upon *the last appeal*, that even then, with all your supposed advantages, it might not terminate to your advantage. "The race is not *always* to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;" but sometimes "the mighty are put down, and the proud are scattered in the imagination of their hearts."—"My deeds," says he, "upon my head! I stand here for law; I stand here on my bond *"—Be not obstinate, Sir, in a wrong cause; peruse, I beseech you, these nugatory deeds (nugatory so far as relates to the point now in dispute) without a prejudice to your own side of the question, and examine with equal attention and candour all that hath been urged against them, by your own friends

as well as your enemies : you will then think differently, depend upon it ; you will chearfully cast them all aside, and, resuming your wonted frankness and good-nature, will treat with the appellant as your *equal* : for all are equals in acts of contract and convention, and in the scales of justice. Be wise, Sir, and be happy. Your future intercourse will, I promise you, be mutually honourable, pleasing and beneficial, provided it be regulated by justice, temper and right reason.—‘ No,’—exclaims the haughty respondent, ‘ I will make no concessions ; I will not condescend to listen to her pleadings, but at my feet. I am not disposed to stoop so low as to treat, when I have power to command.—I reject with disdain all obligations reciprocally binding, while I have power to bind the appellant, and to keep myself free to loosen or to tighten those bonds as it may suit my caprice or my convenience. —On this point I “ reason not at all *.”—They who have neither fleets nor armies, nor——, nor a treasury at command, may treat and reason if they please : but for myself—

“ By my soul I swear

“ There is not pow’r in the tongue of man

“ To alter me †.”

“ I will have the law—I will have my bond,” I say ; or the ‘ rebellious blood of that traitress !’ Since then, Sir, rejoined I for the last time, you reject alike all conciliatory propositions, and, rashly making the last appeal, you trust the issue of this cause to the sword, why, be it so !—Your deeds be upon your head !—And may the God of battles be a shield unto the feeble and oppressed !

Although, as I have said above, that I did not expect the foregoing sheets would for a season be either well received or much attended to, by those to whom they were more immediately addressed ; as indeed I had little better expectations from the public in general, until the failures of all other expedients than that which is there proposed, should open their eyes a little more ; yet I trust, that a discerning

* Burke’s Speech, pag. 87.

† Shylock.

discerning and upright few have read them with approbation; and, if I do not deceive myself, I think there is to be discovered a daily alteration of public sentiment, which tends, though slowly, yet with certainty, to terminate in the conclusion I have long since drawn from the premises which our American contest hath furnished us with. Those who have given a careful attention to the whole of the literary altercation in pamphlets and other publications, and viewed the question also as agitated by the able speakers in the houses of parliament, and have moreover deeply meditated upon it in their own minds, pursuing every material argument to its legitimate result, must I am persuaded have discovered that it ultimately turns upon this one point of *dependency* or *independency*. While this capital point remains undetermined, it appears to me quite a frivolous waste of time to debate upon any other part of the question, which is infinitely complex, while each part refers to this point: it is therefore this, as a leading principle on which all the rest depends, that ought primarily to be considered and decided upon, before any other can be discussed with propriety or advantage. I know not whether the American advocates have paid due attention to the fundamental principles which have given such authority and success to their several pleadings in favour of their injured clients: but all of them, they may depend upon it, when faithfully traced up to their source, and allowed their full operation, will as necessarily and incontestably prove the rights of independency to belong to the British Americans, as they do support the constitutional rights of Englishmen. He who means to shew that those people are not intitled to independence, and yet would argue in support of their *freedom*, will soon contradict or confound himself; for in order thereto, he must derive that freedom from other principles than those of the British constitution; which however no one has yet been silly enough to attempt. Now I do assert and will maintain, that, by the pure and genuine principles and the indispensable maxims of that constitution, they are as much entitled to legislative independence as Englishmen are entitled to representation in parliament, to trial by jury, or any other the most indisputable constitutional benefit whatsoever,

foever, because their *self-preservation* requires it. Would but their many able and patriotic friends amongst us advert to this truth, possess themselves of it clearly and fully, and speak it out boldly, they would find it give a strength and consistency to their arguments, which at present they evidently want and must want without it, as it is the very soul of the cause, and which would not fail to impress an irresistible conviction on the generality of their hearers and readers. For my own part, I solemnly protest, that the main arguments in favour of the colonies, if not resting on the foundation of their right to independence as a principle taken for granted, appear to my judgment very inconclusive and unsatisfactory. They prove indeed to demonstration the impolitic and absurd conduct of administration; and they expose in strong colours their inhumanity, which the principles of tyranny itself will not justify: but still they leave the foundation of their arbitrary power unmoved—untouched:—and so long as nature itself doth not revolt at the excesses of their cruelty, they may, on these gentlemen's own principles, continue tyrants, and plead the sanctions of law and justice against the constitutional rights of the colonists.—So long as they admit that the *British Empire*, as we proudly phrase it, comprehends within it the states of America; so long do they afford the minister all the means he wants for the arbitrary government of those states; arbitrary I say, *because it cannot be otherwise in our hands*. If those states be truly and rightfully parts of this empire, they undoubtedly must submit to British government; but British government, *agreeable to the constitution*, it is impossible, as hath been shewn, to administer them from hence. What is the obvious result?

I am well aware, that by some I shall be thought needlessly to speculate and refine, and be warned against calling in doubt the authority of government with too nice a scrutiny. But to such I answer, that no man would be more backward than myself to risk the peace of society, by bringing unnecessarily into discussion latent and nice distinctions in favour of public liberty, which the governing powers were wise and honest enough to leave dormant and at rest as they found them. But when mistaken, designing

designing or violent ministers avail themselves of the passive inattention of the people to these distinctions in their favour, and thereupon gain a hope of successfully innovating upon the whole of the guards and defences of the constitution; when they make novel demands, introduce new and unsound precedents, cause them hastily and indecently to be passed into laws, and then, under the pretence, and alas! under the sanction of law, proceed to numberless and unheard-of oppressions, which the feelings of a Hottentot would inform him were contrary to reason and to justice; and when they shut their ears against complaints of these wrongs, treat humble petitions with contempt, dutiful remonstrances as acts of disobedience to lawful authority, and constitutional opposition as rebellion; reiterating all the while their tyrannical mandates with more and more severity every time they are not slavishly obeyed;—when, I say, they do all this, and throughout the whole rest their justification on *the letter of the law*, let me ask if it be not high time to *speculate*, to *refine*, and have recourse even to *metaphysical distinctions* *, provided they be *fairly deducible from truth*:—in short, to scrutinize their pretensions to the marrow, to fathom them to the very bottom; in order to detect those covered rocks and sand-banks which are the true causes of all that disturbance we behold on the surface of our present political navigation; and to warn the people against suffering the anchor to be cast in such foul ground at the peril of shipwreck; or trusting any longer the guidance of the vessel to helmsmen who have brought themselves into such a dilemma, that they know not which way to steer for safety; and yet, through pride, shame and vexation, still perversely refuse to have recourse to the compass of the constitution, which alone can set them right and bring them into port. We must either do this, or resign our American kindred to absolute slavery as *by law established*. And on this occasion I must take leave to say, that to the advice of those who recommend the suppressing of truth, we should ever listen with much caution or much jealousy, according to their respective characters. Some there are whom a pardonable timidity, and some whom an amiable humanity and benevolence of mind, incline,

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* Burke's Speech, pag. 89, 94.

cline, and often no doubt with reason, to this circumspect and preventive conduct: but, for the far greater part, it is the artful and insidious suggestion of crafty and ambitious men, who have gotten the power of the state into their own hands; friends to all that mystery, ignorance and superstition on which the keeping of their abused authority depends, and by which the odious vices are to be gratified at the expence of the credulous people. Whereas it is in the divine constitution of things that fallacy in itself, though not perhaps immediately hurtful, hath ever a necessary tendency to introduce evil into the moral and political systems of the world; while truth, on the contrary, tends as naturally and necessarily to the final, though not perhaps to the present, introduction of good. Where indeed there is no attempt to establish fallacies for wicked purposes, it may often be more for the peace and welfare of society that we do not too curiously search after every hidden truth; but when that diabolical attempt is once made, we cannot easily go too deep in our enquiries after it, nor can we place it in too strong a light. Happy will it be for future generations, if their princes and ministers should profit themselves of the wise reflections on this delicate subject which they may find in the excellent *Considerations on the measures carrying on with respect to the British colonies in North America*, p. 22—27.

Were we not carefully to distinguish between general maxims and their exceptions, the writer might, under the authority of the foregoing one, have been totally silent on the subject of these essays: but we trust that the reasons assigned for the part acted on this occasion, will not only acquit us of the base and wicked designs of an incendiary, an unnatural child of Great-Britain, or a traiterous fomentor of rebellion; (charges very liberally bestowed by a certain class of persons on even those champions of American freedom, who have not however as yet given utterance to that horrible word—*independence*) but that we shall in time be allowed to have spoken with the warning voice of a faithful, though unwelcome monitor; of a sincere, affectionate and determined friend, though no flatterer. Conscious of no other motives than what are becoming of this character, we shall proceed to deliver somewhat more fully

fully what at first we rather hinted than explained. Though now indeed it is not our intention to say more than is absolutely necessary to prevent cavils, and in order to furnish materials for thinking upon, to those who are disposed to think: for, from those to whom even *thinking* is too great a trouble, we must not expect the still greater effort of *acting* in the public cause; wherefore it is needless to spend our time in voluminous writing for their information. And after all, those, alas! who are most capable of judging, and whose duty it is to judge of, and to conduct, the public affairs, are the last it should seem from whom attention is to be expected.

But notwithstanding the people, for want of those informations obtained by ministers and statesmen, are less able to judge accurately, yet it is their just praise that they are disposed to judge as well as they can, and have a real desire that things should be conducted for the best, the good of the whole being alone consulted. It is therefore that the judgment of the people, with all its defects, is to be respected; that every assistance is to be afforded it by those who mean well; and that its slow progress in arriving at ripeness and maturity is to be allowed and waited for with patience. Like the nut, when most ripe it is the most solid. The people, though slow indeed to receive instruction, will however in the end listen to reason and learn wisdom. With them, the best arguments and most upright plans will ever be finally approved; and through them alone it is that the friends of public liberty must hope to influence the decisions of the cabinet and the most essential measures of administration, where even two or three virtuous men, though ever so responsible to the public from the nature of their offices, cannot, it is presumable, guide and direct as they would wish; but find themselves under the necessity of either abandoning the helm wholly to bad men, or else of carrying into execution measures which they often in their hearts condemn and sometimes abhor. Sad alternative! And unhappy that state where wisdom and virtue are thus of necessity obliged to vail to vice and insufficiency! But such the alternative must ever be in this country, until the people shall exert themselves to purify the fountain of government: or until the individual

dual who hath alone the power of doing it himself, shall greatly undertake the noble, the god-like task; and for that purpose select about him and resolutely support a few counsellors of an unfashionable virtue and sterling patriotism, wise and intrepid enough to work so thorough and so necessary a reformation, in contempt and despite of the servile and adulatory, the interested and artful, the ambitious and treacherous counsels of those sycophants and devouring locusts that are the general curse of courts and of their country. Whatever may have been suggested to him by those in his bosom confidence, he will find this the surest road to happiness and glory; and the only road to an extraordinary degree of power, which would then be as unbounded as Britain and British America in close union, actuated by one soul, and moving in one direction, could confer. That such a glory, eclipsing all the glories of antiquity would transcend whatever hath irradiated any earthly diadem, that such a power would in the comparison reduce to mere littleness the boasted power of imperial Rome, and cause that proud mistress of the *then feeble and barbarous* world to hide her diminished head, is a proposition as undeniable, in my humble opinion, as that health, vigour and length of days are the natural effects of temperance; honour and happiness the usual offspring of virtue.

When I first undertook to publish my sentiments on the critical situation of this country with her colonies, I was far from despairing that others "would come after me" "mightier than I*;" and it is with infinite satisfaction I have observed to arise, one after another, several excellent and most respectable writers on the subject, "the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose*." I, indeed, with a feeble voice, warned a heedless generation to flee from the evil to come, or more properly to prevent its coming; but there are those who have succeeded me, of whom to an infatuated people I might with much verity say (I hope without prophaneness, for though I adopt the emphatical language of holy writ, I mean no comparison between the persons spoken of), "there stand some among you whom * ye know not †;" preachers of peace and prophets:—
hear

* St. Luke, chap. iii.

† St. John, chap. i. ver. 26.

hear them:—Would to heaven that mistaken ministers and a misguided prince would, after the example of the conscious publicans, say unto them, “Masters, what shall we do?” And that “the soldiers likewise would demand of them, and what shall *we* do?” Because the former must receive for answer, “Exact no more than that which is appointed you;” and the latter would be taught to “Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely *.” While these greater teachers continue to enforce their admonitions with superior eloquence and argument, and with many an instructive reference to the page of history, it being mine to pursue a different path in the same pilgrimage, I mean still to keep within the sphere I first allotted myself. I shall continue to avoid as much as possible all recitals of statutes and authorities, all references to facts and precedents, all appeals to records and histories, as things too often uncertain, vague, indeterminate and contradictory one of another; leading to disputation rather than to truth and happiness, except comprehensively understood, examined and compared with unbiassed candour, and treated of in the most masterly manner. My references are to a law and a constitution which at all times past, present and to come, have spoken, do speak, and ever will speak the same language without any alteration or ambiguity. My appeals are to the common sense, the hearts and consciences of my countrymen. If they mean honestly to themselves and to one another, it will not be necessary for their friends to be at the trouble of writing in a large and voluminous way for their instruction. But such indeed is the real way of the world, that the writings of honest men of every species will be of use, and those of the kind I do not pretend to, if well executed, the most so. However, on the subject now under consideration, they seem to have been carried nearly to their full length; all in a manner that can be said in that way, hath been said; and for the present the subject seems to be exhausted. On the contrary, the line which I have ventured on, I fear with too much presumption, appears to have been neglected: and surely there is field enough for the display of knowledge, the proof of genius, and the exercise of judgment.

* St. Luke, chap. iii.

judgment. I have but as it were passed through it, gathering only a slender specimen of its productions, a few of its spontaneous fruits and flowers which offer themselves to the hand of every traveller: but to him who hath strength and talents for the culture, there is an assurance of a golden harvest.—But until this wished-for husbandman shall arrive, and while we have yet a moment's breathing time ere the bill of famine shall have driven the insulted colonists to desperation, and the fatal consequences shall come upon us like a whirlwind; and with ardent, anxious hopes for the best, I return once more and for the last time to my post.

It is not in order to dispute, for to that there is no end; it is not to recapitulate the endless errors of administrations since 1763, for that too would be a tedious task: neither is it to represent what might have been the happy effects had we invariably proceeded in our ancient course of policy towards the colonies, before the scheme of taxation made the first breach between us; not yet is it to play the state-tinker by pretending to beat out the bruises of a battered vessel, to solder up its cracks, and once more to unite by *cramps* and *rivets* its separating parts, when these very superadditions would only, like the new cloth in the old garment*, rend to pieces its worn-out substance, and hasten the more rapidly its final destruction. No; it is not any one of these impracticable and useless labours I am about to undertake; but, since this same crazy vessel is of the purest metal, yet not well adapted to our future use by reason of its very unwieldy magnitude, and having out-lived the fashion of the times in which it was wrought, I mean that we should act the part of the judicious goldsmith and cast it anew†. Instead of one out-sized vessel, consisting of

* St. Matt. chap. ix. ver. 16.

† In order that the dangerous language of allusion may not mislead, let it be observed that it is not the *constitution of state* either in Great-Britain or the colonies I mean to cast anew; but their *relationship*, their *mutual dependence* and the *terms of their intercourse*. Instead of the impracticable endeavour to prove them to be, and the equally vain attempt for holding them together as, *one empire*; I would have us open our eyes to

of two parts ill joined to each other, like the bulky extremities of a wisp held together by a too-feeble waift, and ever liable to be wounded and even to break afunder at the point of contact, I would have us mould it into two separate and distinct parts or members, which yet, like the ball and socket, should intimately correspond and harmonize throughout their whole extent, wholly filling and embracing each other respectively. Thus would they be inseparably united; yet their union such as to leave each free to move and act, independent of the other, in every respect but that of a capacity to fall away from and desert its companion; and thus would they be perfectly fitted for co-operation one with the other. By these means too the strength, solidity and durableness of both would be improved and increased, in proportion to the reduction of surface and contraction of dimensions in each. Hereby also we should perfectly remedy all those defects in their original construction, which neither were nor could be foreseen by those persons, who through a great variety of different and jarring designs and motives, and at many different periods of time without any kind of concert or conjoint plan, put their several successive hands to this imperfect work: and all apprehensions of future breaches, divisions or total separation, would be for ever removed; at least to a period too far distant in the infinity of time to be foreseen.

While almost the whole legislature, for aught that I know to the contrary, are unanimous in maintaining the grand principle on which administration acts, namely, that the colonies are subject to the supreme legislative power of Great-Britain, and acts consistently enough so long as it has that foundation to go upon; and while a great majority of the people are of the same way of thinking, and still believe themselves intitled, though they know not how, to the very flattering distinction and glory of having a share in this same supreme legislative power; that is to say, while the ministers have the popular voice in support of

to truth, and follow the dictates of wisdom, by confessing they are not, ought not to be, and cannot be one empire; and then use the best means in our power for forming a conjoint and beneficial confederacy of them, as separate, free, and independent states.

of the fundamentals of their American system of government; surely they must be thought to have managed ill in pursuing *measures* that meet with general dislike and condemnation, as arbitrary in an extreme, and directly subversive of the constitution. Whence this inconsistency and contradiction in public sentiment? Must we not learn to account for it by considering the difference of *acting upon false principle*, and of merely entertaining them as *speculative notions* in our own minds? Is not the unreflecting and man-affecting youth continually professing a wish that he could debauch the sister or the daughter of his friend or acquaintance, and is there not sophistry enough in the flattering language of his passions to persuade him 'tis a meritorious, or at least a harmless act: although we often know that he is the farthest from being rascal enough coolly to premeditate and unfeelingly to perform all the wiles and villainy necessary to carry his idle professions into action; and that the first act of baseness in his progress, touching with self-contempt his feeling heart, would open his eyes, and cause him to look with horror and detestation upon what he so lately considered as fair and reputable. So it is not to be wondered at that the *speculative notions*, the *youthful opinions* of an uninstructed and unreflecting people, flattered and misled by *national pride and vanity*, and moreover duped into a belief that the fruition of American delights is not to be had without British sovereignty, should on this occasion be favourable to the support of that very ministerial violence and injustice which however shocks them in the exercise. But did a true sense of the political guilt of administration strike home upon their hearts, we may be very certain they would no longer contribute to it by a heedless declaration of such sentiments; but with one voice confess their error and express their unanimous disapprobation of measures so contrary to the constitution.—While so considerable a party thus do mischief by suffering their reason and their virtuous principles to sleep, there is much more harm done by those, who for the sake of popularity and their own purposes, profess in a great measure that which is right, while we know they have no principles at all, and are the mere slaves of interest and a traitorous ambition. These are the professed libertines and confirmed debauchees

debauchees in politics ; who, while they laugh at the plain orthodox doctrines in government, hold yet a certain latitudinarian, pliable, free-thinking kind of a faith, which may very conveniently be interpreted either this way or that, as shall be necessary to condemn a rival or to justify themselves for the self-same actions. These men, when ministers, will commit adultery with a state in wedlock, violate the virginity of a colony, or hold an incestuous commerce with the mother-country without one feeling of compunction ; and can produce you their philosophical creed with many a nice distinction, many a subtle stroke of casuistry, which, though it is impossible to understand, they will most religiously assure you not only affords them a justification, but enjoins on them what they have done as a positive and indispensable duty. But then, let the wheel of court-fortune give but a single turn, and topple them out of the seat of power, this same creed shall instantly be produced to prove the clean contrary. Nay, their piety is now shocked to such a degree at deeds so foul and enormities so gross, and their zeal for the true faith runs so high, they lift up their voices and cry aloud, that the present perpetrators of *their own crimes* are not men but monsters, not sound political divines but state dæmons, and that nothing less than their blood can make atonement for their crimes. Of this stamp I fear are too many of those who are now ready to tear the minister in pieces for coercing the colonies into obedience to *that very authority which they themselves contributed to establish, and even now* (in order to preserve the means of acting the tyrant themselves when it shall again come to their turn) *maintain they are subject to.* After concurring to lodge in any man's hands an unjust and arbitrary power, 'tis ridiculous to talk of his abusing it. We might with as much reason cut a breach in our bank, and complain of the river for overflowing our lands. It is not, in my opinion, by carping and cavilling at this proposal and that plan of the minister, or running counter to all his measures, that his opponents are to shew their patriotism at this crisis ; but first, by making a conquest within their own breasts over all the pride, ambition and inordinate love of rule which they shall find there ; and then by contending like

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men for the grand constitutional principles and fruit, not the empty forms and husks of government. Before I can compliment these gentlemen with my suffrage for the minister's power being transferred to their better keeping, they must convince me that they differ with him in *essentials*. I must perceive that they allow and maintain that the colonist's title to liberty is as good and *as extensive* as their own; and that they strive with all their strength to procure them such a liberty. When they do this, they will have the suffrages of most reflecting, dispassionate and upright men to favour their *then honest* ambition. But here, alas! is the stumbling-block. They can reproach the minister with a design against the liberties of America; they can talk, and talk, and say abundance of fine things in favour of freedom: but, once mention to them the word *independence*, they shrug their shoulders and cry, 'that is carrying things too far;—American freedom is very consistent with a parliamentary legislative supremacy' (this indeed is coming to the point, would they but give us their *proof* of this proposition; but that I believe they will find cannot be given.) 'The colonists, say they, are certainly entitled to liberty; but (according to Mr. Burke's language) it must be a "subordinate liberty:" it must not be allowed more than the ample range of a parliamentary managerie, which is "enough surely for the ease and happiness of man *;" or its wings must be properly clipped, in order to keep it within *the bounds prescribed* it by the superintending and controlling power of the present state.' The plain English is, that not being the minister, they are not disposed to sympathize with him in *his* inordinate love or extravagant exercise of power; but when it is *their own dearly-beloved power*, as members of the British legislature, which is to be parted with, they are then all sensibility and shrink at the very thought. "Here's the rub that makes *tyranny* of so long life †." A change of measures only in American affairs, would probably be more satisfying to the public than any change of men which could be made in the American, or chief responsible department.

Perhaps

* Burke's Speech, pag. 94.

† Hamlet's Soliloquy.

Perhaps there cannot in nature be so strong a refutation of the senseless position that, 'the colonies are virtually (that is *actually*, for the terms are as nearly as possible synonymous) represented in the parliament of Great-Britain,' as the *general feelings* (of which are born the general opinions,) of the bulk of the people on the two sides of the Atlantic. The people of Great-Britain, notwithstanding how greatly they are abused in this particular, do *feel* that they enjoy an actual and virtual representation, such as it is; and they do firmly believe it, nay they *know* it of a certainty. But, with regard to their American friends being so represented as themselves, and that the very men whom *they alone* have deputed are the representatives of the said Americans, it *not coming home to their feelings*, nor being *level with their understandings*, some think one way, some another, as information, attention or clearness of intellect enables them to judge: whereas on the contrary, *there is not an American on the whole continent who can be such an idiot* as to believe he is represented in a parliament composed of men, in the electing and deputing of whom *not one American*, as an American, did or could give a suffrage; because the certainty of the ill consequences, the self-evidency of the point, his common sense, and every feeling of his mind, all give the lie direct to the impudent assertion. How it can be demonstrated therefore, that they are subject to the authority of such a parliament *, and that "of right it should have a power of " binding them in all cases whatsoever," I confess once more I am totally unable to conceive. This is not the doctrine of the constitution; for that doth in every volume, in every line, in every letter, teach and inculcate the very contrary.

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* The enemies of liberty may save themselves the fruitless trouble of endeavouring to persuade us, that there is any mysterious virtue in the nature of the legislature on account of its consisting of a king and lords, as well as representatives of the people, to rule over and bind the colonists; for the constitution knows of no legislative powers whatever which are not partaken of by the people, who are to submit their actions to their authority.

I never before knew that any state of being would admit of two different definitions repugnant to each other; and I am curious to see this new phenomenon in logic,—a definition to prove liberty to be one thing under the rising, and quite a different thing under the setting sun; and the more so, as it seems to have an immediate relation to another matter, which is one of the grand desiderata in science, and a point of high importance to the maritime world. Should but this new-discovered liberty be found to vary from the liberty of Great-Britain in any certain regular proportion as we go eastward or westward, which no doubt will be as clearly demonstrable as its own existence, we shall then have nothing more to do than to calculate the exact difference of liberty between any two meridians, those for instance of London and Boston in New-England, and this will give us at once their difference of longitude, and save the philosophers a world of trouble. What a happy discovery! How the sciences cast lights upon one another! Who could have thought we should be at once indebted to the same benefactors for a new species of, I had like to have said a new invented liberty and a discovery of the longitude? After this hint, they will be much to blame if they do not push on their researches and perfect their discovery; since such solid rewards will now await the success of their labours. I promise them I will take no advantage of the ladder they have provided, by running up before them and snatching away the golden prize.—

The reader will have perceived that I am of opinion, the present political agitation of things, where all is fermentation and turbid ebullition, will either refine itself into a happy *solution*, where all shall again be transparent and serene; and wherein British commerce, wealth, dignity and strength shall all be suspended and sustained by affinity and the sweet influence of attraction in the rectified spirit of American liberty and independence, without injury to its clearness, beauty or relish; or else, that it will sluggishly subside into an undefined and undefinable *mixture* of liberty and tyranny, of partial benefits and reciprocal injuries, with the putrid dregs of corruption ever at the bottom for increasing this muddiness on every motion by
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its foul contaminations, in order to prevent the people from discovering the specific ingredients which are the nauseous and baneful components, or at least from being able to ascertain their quantities and proportions so as to know how to provide themselves with a proper and sufficient antidote. He will likewise have perceived that this is a mixture I am not very willing to have poured down the throat of America, or administered to this country as the proper remedy in her present vital decay. Indeed, so far as relates to the future health and preservation of the colonies, I have much more faith in the healing virtues of the following excellent simples—legislative separation and independence, provincial separation and independence one of another, an exclusion of all military policy, except that of self-defence by militia, constant jealousy and watchfulness for the perpetuation of liberty, together with a particular and a general commercial and protective maritime alliance with Great-Britain: as on our own part, my only hope lies in parliamentary, and consequently national reformation, which however I fear nothing but some severe calamity will bring us to; in our thirst for dominion being moderated and restrained within natural bounds; in public integrity, public œconomy, public industry and public spirit. These are the best, and I verily believe the only preservatives of their constitutions and restoratives of our own. Did but these become the general opinions of those who are really friends to their country, and American independence the first immediate object of their joint labours, I should hope there is yet righteousness enough left to save our city: and I am persuaded, even to conviction, that this wholesome regimen would infuse such new life, spirit and vigour into the constitution of Great-Britain, as in its political effects should exceed in the intrinsic value and transcend in lustre all that ever hath been experienced by any nation upon earth. Even America, whose portion would be the smallest, would find herself in true and permanent happiness, if not in splendor, superior to the most renowned empire of ancient or modern times; and perhaps not inferior to Great Britain, her august husband himself, if I may be indulged in that adopted term.

But

But yet I am aware, that I have the old and the grand objection to my proposal still to contend with. It will still be urged, that when you shall have acknowledged and sealed this independency to the colonies, and done your best to secure for yourselves the beneficial monopoly of their trade and other advantages, by the general league of perpetual amity and alliance, of protection and compensation, they will pay no sort of regard to such engagements on their parts; and then you will no longer, for want of your sovereign legislative authority, have power to compel their compliance. I have already spoken, as the reader will recollect, to this question. I have already observed, that we shall still have the same force for awing America into a faithful observance of her treaties that we now have to enforce obedience to a disputed and odious sovereignty *, which is growing more and more odious every day; and this with many obvious advantages that do not attend the exertions of our present authority: so that I will only farther request a suspension of judgment until the reader shall have examined and scrutinized the proposal itself; as it stands in its new and improved dress towards the close of this postscript, in the form of a draft for a declaratory and conciliatory act of parliament. Let it speak for itself. It will at least, I flatter myself, give better security for the grand colonial benefits which, I presume, are the proper objects of our care and policy, than the present red-hot system of coercion to *we know not what*, should it even succeed to the utmost wish and desire of administration; of which however we may very reasonably doubt. And should it fail, what have we then to look for!—It may be well with us in that day if nothing worse than national bankruptcy and beggary shall befall us.

Now the utmost failure of the policy recommended in these essays, which, without violating all credibility, it is possible to conceive, cannot at the worst make the Americans *our enemies*, and thereby invite other rival states to make war upon us; neither can it produce any other important ill consequences, or greatly diminish the trade and strength of this kingdom. That the commercial restraints to which the league shall bind them, may be frequently

* American Independence, pag. 65.

quently evaded by the Americans, I am very ready to grant. And when this is granted, let me ask if I have not granted all that we have to apprehend as disadvantageous to us from that system. Has the possession of our sovereignty, I pray, hitherto been found sufficient to prevent smuggling and illicit commerce; or is there any newly discovered virtue in that kind of authority by which it will more effectually operate in those cases hereafter? Doth the sovereign power in this island, where it is perfect, prevent these practices on any part of our own coasts, and even daily under the very nose of government in the capital? Let the objectors only say by what rule, while we continue to govern America by parliamentary authority, their clandestine trade is to be prevented; and I will undertake to provide regulations among the conditions of the general league and the separate treaties full as effectual for answering the same ends. In short, the objection that the American states will not observe the proposed treaties with Great-Britain, *merely because of their being in a state of freedom*, appears to me, when it comes from the well-meaning, to be an objection of timidity, of narrow comprehension and error; as I am sensible it is, from too many others, an objection of national pride and prejudice that hath nothing to do with national dignity: while there is another still, and that I fear the most powerful, though not the most numerous party, from whose ready lips and restless pens it is an objection of servility, baseness, treachery, filthy avarice, boundless ambition, and every other vice which in confederacy with despotism, is found to be eternally at enmity with liberty and public happiness.

By men whose souls for ever dwell in the darkness and chaos of contending passions, whose minds are over-gorged with an indigestible load of reading, and whose experience hath all lain in the hollow ways and beaten tracks of official business, or in the crooked and under-ground paths of corrupt policy, the proposal I make will in all probability be rejected without consideration, merely because "the file affords no precedent *:" and the rule I have observed, of arguing somewhat abstractedly; and referring only to that best criterion of good government, the three-fold

* Burke's Speech, pag. 48.

fold mirror composed of the constitution of England, the law of nature, and the religion of Christ, is not I know more likely to meet with their approbation. But men of intrinsic worth, of liberal natures, of great and independent souls, who have searched into books and men more with the mental eye than the bodily organ, and who, taking an enlarged view of things, have reconnoitred well the geography of the moral and political world from the eminences of exalted genius and wisdom; men who know how to strike out new paths and to open new communications as new occasions shall require; men of this stamp, I say, will be indulgent to my mode of proceeding, and give at least a candid examination to what is laid before them. While deeply engaged in comprehensive and complicated plans, while marshalling and ordering the vast array of a nation's affairs, and occupied in active services to their country, they will be thankful for any hint which may serve to correct the little oversights and irregularities of their movements, and for the occasional communications of those discoveries which their less occupied attendants, even the meanest of them, may accidentally have made before them.

But though we talk of new discoveries, and recommend to practice untried expedients in policy, it is not thence to be inferred that we are wandering ourselves without a guide, or shall mislead others who may incline to follow us. While we stedfastly keep our eye upon our *unvarying compass* *; while we refer others also to that alone, and appeal in every step we take to the heart of every candid and unbiaſſed person, we may safely venture farther than any have yet dared to go before us, and we doubt not to lead the way to reconciliation, harmony and happiness, provided our intimations be not too long disregarded. Our ideas are rather suggested or hinted than enlarged upon, wishing every one to trace them to their necessary conclusions his own way: which is a mode of proceeding not to be relied upon by any, except those whose principles are founded in truth, whose intentions are honest, and whose advice is free from the suspicion of any indirect views or designs. Should our suggestions furnish the seed
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* Foregoing Letter to Mr. Burke.

of any useful matter, we trust it will not all "fall by the way-side, and be devoured by the fowls of the air *;" who are so ready to execute the will of "the prince of the powers of the air;" nor yet that it will not wholly "fall upon stony ground or amongst thorns;" but that some part at least shall fall into the kindly and generous soil of true British bosoms, and bring forth plenteously the fruits of liberty and prosperity. We do not aim at any reputation from these essays: we wish only to see the tree we have endeavoured to produce shoot up vigorously, thrive and flourish under the culture and protection of more masterly hands, and become the object of desire and admiration; while the little kernel from which it sprang shall be no more thought of. Our ambition is that which lives not by the breath of princes, nor hangs upon the world's opinion; but is supported and gratified by the internal consciousness of a sincere desire to serve the public, and therefore can feel no mortification or disappointment but in public failures or misfortunes. And our aim, while too many well-meaning men are spending themselves in arguing where argument is thrown away, is to put forth once more a hand, feeble as it is, in the actual attempt; by endeavouring to give a real being and permanent existence to some rational plan, which, when the mist of our infatuation shall be swept away before the storm that is gathering, and not a moment allowed us for deliberation, may be had recourse to as the ready means, perhaps the only means, of saving the state.

With the same public views which we believe were those of Lord Chatham, when he offered his Conciliatory Bill to the House of Lords, we have made the following draught of a bill for the same purpose, which however we hope will not, upon a close examination, be found to contain in it such unconstitutional materials as his Lordship's. Although we have the highest respect for that Lord's political abilities, yet we cannot understand why, or by what divine right, the British parliament, in which the people of our colonies making many flourishing states in America with legislatures of their own fully competent

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* St. Mark, chap. iv. ver. 3.

for procuring them all the ends of civil government have no participation whatever, should or can possibly, without a violation of the law of nature, enact, that "those colonies of right ought to be dependent upon the imperial (imperial is a fine word) crown of Great-Britain, and subordinate unto the said British parliament." Nor will our understanding, although we have given it very severe discipline for that purpose, be brought by any means to acknowledge that this said British parliament hath of right any power whatever "to make laws and statutes to bind the said people in all matters touching the general weal of the whole dominion of the said imperial (imperial is a great word) crown of Great-Britain;" not even in that "indubitable and indispenfible" point, as his Lordship thinks it, of "regulating navigation and trade throughout the complicated (complicated indeed, if this reasoning holds good) system of British commerce." And we believe that "the guardian navy of the whole British Empire (whole British Empire is a grand expression) will be upheld" by adhering to strict justice, to equal liberty, and the plain and obvious principles of the British constitution, rather better and more securely than by any "deep policy" whatever. The chief use which hath ever been made of deep policy in any age or country, hath been that of introducing into government an oracular mysteriousness, in order to give the administrators of it a sacerdotal power, and to render the people a credulous manageable herd of dupes. Could we have any doubt of the inadmissibility of the aforesaid pretensions of the British parliament, while they stood by themselves, surely our eyes must be opened, and the fallaciousness of that reasoning on which they are supported be exposed to our view, when we find that they are brought to prove a right in his Majesty to keep up a standing-army in the colonies; and, if he thinks proper, the whole of that army, which is annually voted by parliament for the service of the whole British Empire, the same by his prerogative being under his absolute command. When reasoning fails to convince, we may frequently with good success appeal to people's feelings.—What would Englishmen feel to have an immense stand-
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ing army of Americans quartered upon them at the king's pleasure, for no one purpose which they could possibly divine but to enforce his minister's will?—What must the people of New-England at this moment feel?—Indignation denies utterance.—Those quibbles and sophisms which are intended to inculcate it as a doctrine, that any people or nation (and by what exception to the general providence of God and the laws of nature are the Americans to be reckoned neither nations nor people?) may be rightfully subjugated to such a complete state of slavery as that of having no participation in making even their own *laws of defence*, as if inferior to the very brute animals they were void of the first principle of nature, that of self-preservation, are so very contemptible, that I must confess it pains me with a mortifying sense of human infirmity, that they should escape from the venerable lips of a man renowned for wisdom, magnanimity and nobleness of sentiment. After asserting the right of the crown to quarter troops upon the colonies at discretion, of what avail the following gentle ditty of a clause? “Never-
 “theless, in order to quiet and dispel *groundless* jealousies
 “and fears, be it hereby declared, that no military force,
 “however raised, and kept according to law, can ever
 “be lawfully employed to violate and destroy the just
 “rights of the people.”—Is this a clause to curb the pride of arbitrary kings and ministers?—Why are the means of preserving themselves,—Heaven's best gift and the prerogative of human nature!—to be denied to the British Americans?—If these, O Britons, are your principles of colonial government, ye are most execrable tyrants, unworthy the freedom yourselves enjoy and so ingloriously boast of! What are the means of your own self-preservation as a people, a civil community?—Are they not the having a participation in *all the laws* by which ye are governed; and a controlling power over the crown and its ministers by your commons holding the purse-strings, and having the sole giving and granting to the government its revenues?—Why then are the people of America to be deprived of the same means of self-preservation, the same controlling power, over the crown and other branches of their respective governments? This is the grand, the fun-

damental principle on which I maintain the right and the necessity of independence being given to the British Americans ;—this is *the vital principle of the British constitution*—Deprive it of this one principle, and it is that moment a dead letter.—Not one word hath been advanced by the legions of ministerial hireling speakers and writers, nor by the many hollow pretenders to patriotism throughout the almost innumerable speeches and productions that have for eleven years past being poured upon the public, that hath in the smallest degree invalidated this principle : as indeed it is utterly impossible that it should be invalidated, for it is written in the book of eternal truths by the finger of the Almighty.—I do therefore repeat, that unless the British Americans be in a condition to act upon this principle, they are in a state of slavery : and except there shall be some way found (which I believe is impracticable) for effecting an union of their several assemblies with our parliament, so as to enable the grand confederated legislature to act as one body, and to dispense equally to the people on both sides the Atlantic, the ends and benefits of good government ; except, I say, these provisions be made, I do continue to maintain my original position, that the British American states, call them colonies, provinces, or what you will, do not owe any subjection to the single legislature of Great-Britain ; nor are they under any legal obligation, or necessity, upon the principles of natural law, to acknowledge any dependency on the British parliament.—If this were so in fact, surely there is ingenuity enough amongst us to frame a syllogism that would demonstrate it.—But it is an undeniable fact, that no such demonstration hath been given. It is equally certain that no such demonstration can be given.

Having no occasion to accompany Lord Chatham regularly through the whole of his bill, I will now, after making an observation or two more, take my leave of it. Could I from my heart make a full “ recognition of the “ supreme legislative authority and superintending power “ of parliament over the colonies,” I should esteem the remaining part of this bill as a display of much wisdom and humanity : but utterly rejecting that supremacy and superintending power, as I do from a thorough conviction

tion of mind, I cannot discover, nor have I ever observed a satisfactory reason to have been given, why the prudent and frugal colonists should contribute one farthing towards the relief of burthens brought upon ourselves by our own folly, extravagance, and corruption. The notoriety of the fact, that we voted them, *of our own mere motion*, considerable sums for relief of *their* burthens in the war, when we were convinced they had contributed *more than their quota*, is, I should have thought, a full answer to all the arguments made use of on the part of the people of Great-Britain, for having willingly taken a burthen too heavy to be borne “upon ourselves and *posterity*, which “in no inconsiderable part was for the defence, extension, “and prosperity of the colonies *,” as his Lordship, following therein the ministerial writers, expresses himself. But the most sanguine in this expectation upon the liberality of the colonists, should in reason wait until they have wholly discharged *their own national debts*, before they require their contributory aid towards the relief of ours. Indeed a little patience would be sufficient upon this occasion; for though the expences of the war did run them in debt, yet by the prudent and faithful use and application of their public money or taxes (for they really pay taxes in abundance, which many of the good people of Great-Britain, who are for ever crying ‘tax them, tax them,’ do not I presume suppose, but imagine that they live in a manner at free-cost, and put all the profits of their trade in their pockets) they have got themselves nearly out of debt again. Had we not better follow their wise example, than expect them and their posterity to pay for our and our predecessors stupidity and folly?—’Tis enough surely to entail the curse of our debt upon our own innocent posterity!—With regard to the provision which his Lordship recommends for the personal security of the American subject, and the due administration of justice in criminal prosecutions, that he shall not “be deprived of a “trial by the peers of the vicinage,” it is to be observed, that the idea of the judgment of the vicinage, for the security

* See American Independence, pag. 20, where this argument is more fully refuted; as indeed it hath been by various writers.

rity and protection of the subject, pervades the whole system of English jurisprudence, and is an essential principle of the constitution. Hence it is, that in both criminal and civil cases we have a right to put ourselves upon our country; and even the jury which hath the disposal of our life or property in its hands, is subject to a most extensive right of challenge on our part of the persons it is composed of, in order that we may exclude all such as *we have reason to suppose prejudiced against us*. And this judgment of the vicinage is equally our right in respect of *taxation*; for the constitutional idea in this case is, that the subject shall be taxed only through his own delegate sent from his vicinage, and who knows what he is able to pay, and in what mode the payment will be most convenient to him. If I be on this occasion referred to the present house, and other late houses of commons, and desired to count over the numbers of those who come from the vicinage of their constituents, I am ready to reply, that *they ought to come from thence*; that the representatives of the people always *did* come from thence, till corruption found its way into our government, and threw the whole frame into disorder; and that whenever the purity of parliament and annual elections shall be restored, they will *once more* come from the vicinage of their constituents; at which time, and not till then, we may look for many necessary reformatations, and to have the taxes so levied and so applied as to leave the labourer a comfortable subsistence, and to relieve the state of the burthen it groans under with so much anguish. This pervading principle in our inestimable constitution, of *the judgment of the vicinage* for security of life, liberty and property, shews us in a moment what are the principles of those who contend for the right of the parliament of *Great-Britain* taxing the people of *America*. So late in the controversy as appeared the writer of *Taxation no Tyranny*, and so universally acknowledged as are the great abilities of the *reputed* author, I was led to infer that he, no doubt, must have thrown some new light on the point of American representation in the British parliament, and of virtual representation in general; but, alas! how great my disappointment! And how great also must be the credulity of those who can believe, that such an indecent scrap
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of trash is really the production of *a pen that hath formerly done so much honour to literature, and so much service to the cause of morality as that of Dr. Johnson!* It is impossible that such an impudent attempt as this is upon the understandings of the public should have been made by any one who had that gentleman's reputation and moral character to have preserved. If indeed an imitation of the capital defects observable in the Doctor's style, like the mimicry of an awkward attitude or ridiculous gesture, could at first sight strike the reader with a resemblance; yet the total want of argument, and candour, which this pamphlet betrays, in so lamentable a degree, must satisfy him, after the smallest share of attention, that the real writer of this wretched piece cannot possibly rank any higher in the literary, political, or moral world, than some unprincipled parish pedagogue, in hopes by selling his vote to the pensioned squire of being made an exciseman; and from the air of self-importance, insolence, and contempt which runs through every turgid line, he might very naturally suppose this pamphlet to be the substance of an oration, delivered by the affectedly-sententious declaimer over a mug of porter, amidst a circle of pot-house admirers.

The reader must pardon some little repetition of what he found in my tenth letter, in order that the whole of my present conciliatory plan may lie together; as I will leave as much of it as I can possibly dispense with, to be filled up by his judgment and the obvious inferences from the leading propositions.

A draught for a bill, proposed to be brought into parliament, for restoring peace and harmony between Great-Britain and the British colonies in North-America; and for perpetuating the same on the solid foundations of national affection, natural justice, reciprocal benefit and mutual security.

WHEREAS, at the time of the original planting and settling of colonies on the continent and the islands of North-America by the people and the crown of these kingdoms; and afterwards, during the infancy of the said colonies, the future ill consequences of their submission to, and acquiescence under the authority of parliament were not, by reason of their then infant and dependent state, and the general inexperience in matters of that kind, either foreseen or duly attended to: *And whereas*, through the growing of these once small and helpless colonies more or less to maturity, and their having now become, for the far greater part populous, opulent and respectable states, having each within itself the natural rights and proper powers of legislation, the exercise of parliamentary authority hath been found to clash in the most essential points with their respective internal legislatures, and hath tended, for a considerable time past, but more especially of late years, to create dissatisfactions and disagreements between the said internal legislatures and parliament, and between the people of the said colonies and the people of these kingdoms, to the great grief of his Majesty, his parliament, and all his good and faithful subjects; as well as that it will be to the irreparable hurt and damage (should these misunderstandings continue) of the good people

people in general, and the states of both countries, by tending to abate their mutual affection and confidence, and by interrupting their wonted harmony and long-established commerce.

And whereas the colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, in Congress assembled in the months of September and October last, did by their delegates draw up an humble petition, which was since presented to his Majesty, for redress of sundry grievances therein set forth; and came to many other resolutions on the subject of the unhappy differences still subsisting between them and this the parent state; all which have been laid before us for our inspection, together with various other papers of information transmitted from the American governors and others: *And whereas* these weighty matters, pregnant with the most important consequences to these kingdoms and the said colonies, have been taken into our most serious consideration; and after the most full and mature deliberation thereupon, it appears to us that, agreeable to the law and the constitution of England, the established maxims of civil government, the principles of natural justice, the obvious rules of good policy, and the benign spirit of our most holy religion, their representations and allegations set forth in the said petition to his Majesty, are in the main just and true, and consequently their complaints well founded, and that their desires and requests are reasonable: *And moreover* we think it is and will be inconsistent with the welfare of the people of the said colonies, and prejudicial to their inherent rights as men, to be any longer governed or controlled by any superintending legislative power in the parliament of Great-Britain, or any other power foreign to themselves respectively: *And therefore*, that to treat with the said colonies in a free and amicable manner towards healing the present divisions, adjusting their future relationship to these kingdoms, and promoting as far as may be the common quiet and prosperity on the surest and most solid foundations, will well become the wisdom and dignity of parliament: *Now in order* to effect these good purposes, and to avert the many

and sad evils and calamities which must necessarily ensue, should their complaints be unredressed, should the powers of parliament as set forth in a Declaratory Act of the 6th of George III. continue to be insisted on and enforced, and the present unhappy differences between them and us be left unreconciled and permitted to cause an actual breach and hostile contention between us; *And in order* no less to manifest unto the said colonies and to all the world that justice, magnanimity, a love of liberty, and a sacred regard for the rights of mankind are still, as they have ever been, the peculiar characteristics of the British parliament; *May it please your most excellent Majesty*, that it may be declared, and be it declared by the king's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal and commons in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that the afore-mentioned colonies of *New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina*; and also the several colonies of *East Florida, West Florida, Georgia, Nova-Scotia, St. Johns the Island, and Quebec as limited by his Majesty's Royal Proclamation bearing date the 7th day of October 1763*, are all and each of them to be henceforth held to be free and independent states, owing no obedience or subjection whatsoever to the parliament of Great-Britain, which doth hereby in the most explicit, determinate, and ample manner and form renounce and relinquish all claims and pretensions to sovereignty, legislative supremacy, and controlling power over the respective legislatures of all and every of the said free and independent states of North-America; together with all rights and titles of dominion on the said continent of North-America, other than as hereafter in this act are claimed and specified. *And it is hereby farther declared*, that of each and every of the said free and independent states, his Majesty is and shall be held to be the true and lawful sovereign head, and in the said sovereignty and the just exercise of the powers thereunto belonging, shall be maintained and supported by the whole power of the parliament and people of Great-Britain; and that his successors in the British throne,

throne, shall in like manner succeed to and be supported in the regal title, rights and powers in and over each and every of the said free and independent states; *And it is also hereby farther declared and proclaimed*, that the parliament of Great-Britain will be the guardian and protector of all and every of the said free and independent states, collectively and individually, against every foreign power whatsoever; as well as the guarantee of the independence of the said several states, one of another respectively; as well also of the rights and independencies of the several tribes or nations of Indians in amity with or under the protection of the British crown, until these points shall be more particularly adjusted by treaty. *And farther*, each one and every of the said free and independent states are hereby invited to nominate and send over to England, as soon as may be, after the month of September next, each of them one plenipotentiary delegate, duly commissioned and authorized to attend the parliament at Westminster, in order, at the most convenient time after their first meeting or setting in the year of our Lord 1776, and before a joint-committee of the lords and commons of this realm to be appointed for the occasion, to express in due form their hearty and grateful acceptance of this declared and guaranteed independence and protection; and to accede to, and make a full and satisfactory acknowledgment and recognition of, the several rights of sovereignty and dominion claimed by the crown of Great-Britain in and over the seas, lakes and great rivers of North-America, as in this act are hereafter particularly declared and specified; and moreover with the said committee, to enter into a solemn, perpetual, and joint confederation, or general and grand league and alliance, offensive and defensive, for maintaining entire and in its full force that cordial and warm affection which hath heretofore so closely bound together and united Great-Britain and British America; and which, in consideration of the near and strong ties of kindred; of the community of laws, language, manners and religion; of the reciprocalness and inseparable nature of their commercial interests; as well as in consideration also of their natural and necessary connection as protectors and protected; ought for ever most sacredly and inviolably to be

preserved between them, in preference to every other political connection, alliance, confederacy, treaty or engagement, whatsoever and with whomsoever. *Now in order to maintain the undoubted rights of sovereignty and dominion belonging to the crown of Great-Britain in North-America, and the seas, lakes, great rivers and creeks thereof; and for preserving undiminished the rights and dignity of the British flag, and the honour and respect due to the same, may it also please your most excellent Majesty, that it may be farther declared, and it is hereby farther declared, that the dominion of the sea from the mouth of the river Mississippi to the northern extremity of the continent of North America, and all admiralty jurisdiction within the same, did and doth of right solely belong and appertain unto, and depend upon the crown and kingdom of Great-Britain; And also, that the island of Newfoundland and its dependencies, together with the Great and Lesser fishing Banks of the same, extending from latitude 41. 00 to latitude 48. 30 N. together with that other called St. Peter's Bank, do also of right solely belong and appertain unto and depend upon the said crown and kingdom; excepting the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, together with certain liberties of taking and curing fish on the said banks and coasts of Newfoundland, ceded and granted under certain restrictions unto the subjects of the French king by the late treaty of peace between the two crowns; And also, that the entire country of Labrador, bounded to the south-west by Quebec, as limited by his Majesty's royal proclamation, bearing date the 7th day of October, 1763, aforesaid; that is to say, beginning at the river St. John's in the gulph of St. Lawrence, and extending to Hudson's Straits, together with all the islands and fisheries of the same, doth in like manner of right solely belong to and depend upon the said crown and kingdom; As well as all those countries, coasts and fisheries granted by a conditional charter to the exclusive occupation of the Hudson's Bay Company: And is hereby also farther declared, that all the great lakes of North America, viz. Lake Iroquois or Champlain, Lake Ontario or Catarakui, Lake Erie or Oswego, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, and Lake Superior, together with the great rivers Mississippi and*
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St. Lawrence, all the navigable communications between lake and lake, and every other navigable lake, river and creek in and throughout the said continent of North America, are of right subject to the naval sovereignty and dominion of the said crown and kingdom alone; and that the said crown hath a right also to the free use of all the customary carrying-places between one navigation and another: *And it is hereby farther declared and made known*, that the said crown of Great-Britain will not suffer any other power or state whatsoever, to navigate any of the said seas, lakes, rivers, communications or creeks, with ships or vessels of war of any kind; nor to carry on war or commit hostilities in any-wise against any other people, nation or state within or upon any of the said navigations, except they be legally authorized so to do by especial commission under the great seal of the admiralty of Great-Britain: *Nor* will the said crown consent to or suffer any of the aforementioned free and independent states of North America, to navigate the seas thereof, with ships or vessels of war; nor to carry on war or commit hostilities in any-wise against any other people or state by sea, except authorized thereto as above: *And moreover*, by the authority aforesaid, it is also declared, that in order to preserve inviolate and in full efficiency the above proposed alliance, which shall be known and distinguished by the title of *The Grand British League and Confederacy*, the said crown of Great-Britain will not, at any time hereafter, suffer or permit the trading or fishing-ships or vessels of any kingdom or state whatsoever, such kingdom or state not being a party to the said grand British league and confederacy, to navigate, fish or trade in any of the said North American seas, lakes or rivers other than is at present allowed to foreign states in general, and by treaty to France and Spain in particular: nor to anchor upon the said coasts, nor to approach them within two leagues of the land any where between the aforesaid boundary of the river Mississippi and the northern extremity of the said American continent, under pain of confiscation of ship and cargo to his Majesty, as king of Great-Britain and sovereign of the North American seas. *Neither* shall it be lawful for the subjects of any of the said free and independent states of North

North America, to fish upon the great fishing-banks of Newfoundland, or of St. Peter afore-mentioned, or upon the coasts of the island of Newfoundland, or upon the coasts of Labrador, except only for whale; nor to enter the ports of the same for trade, or for any other purpose than what immediately relates to the business of whaling and the sheltering and resitment of their whaling-ships or vessels, on pain of confiscation of ship and cargo as above. *Provided nevertheless*, that no claim of sovereignty or dominion, made by this act, or hereafter to be made on the part of the crown of Great-Britain, in and over the afore-mentioned lakes, rivers, communications and creeks, lying between the gulph of St. Lawrence and river Mississippi, or any of them, shall be understood or construed to extend to any right, property or interference in the fisheries, or other liberties or appropriations therein, to the prejudice of any private right, privilege or property whatsoever; but shall always be understood to be confined solely and wholly to such a free use of the same, as is necessary to all the purposes of navigation of every sort, and the maintainance of naval dominion merely. *And may it please your Majesty*, that it may be also enacted, and be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that it shall not be lawful, after the signing and final executing of the afore-mentioned Grand British League and Confederacy, for any public monies whatsoever, being part of the revenues of the crown in the dominions of Great-Britain, or in any of the said free and independent states of British America respectively, to be either paid or remitted from the said British dominions unto America, or from any of the said free and independent states unto the British dominions, for the use of his Majesty, his heirs or successors, as sovereign of that kingdom or state in which it shall be intended to be received: excepting only such monies as it may be requisite at any time hereafter to remit to America for defraying the necessary expences of his Majesty's British navy there.

And now in order that no possible cause of doubt may remain, touching the validity or sincerity of the above declaration of freedom and independence, but that it may be clear, full and satisfactory, and thereby lay a sure and
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solid foundation for such perpetual concord, amity, alliance and mutually beneficial commerce between the states and people of Great-Britain and British America, as, under the good providence of Almighty God, who shall behold this act of national justice and good-will with an eye of pleasure, and will doubtless bless and further such benevolent designs for the maintainance of peace and happiness, and the prevention of discord and bloodshed between kindred states, and fellow-christians, no length of time shall impair or diminish; nor the arts or intrigues of foreign powers be able to disturb or interrupt, may it please your most excellent Majesty, that it may be enacted, *and it is hereby enacted* by the king's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, That all and every of such acts of parliament as have at any time heretofore been particularly made, or intended to declare or maintain a supreme legislative power and authority over the people of the British American colonies as subjects of this realm, or for binding in any manner or degree the said people as subjects of this realm; and so much of all and every other act of parliament as extends to exercise supreme legislative power over any of the people of the said colonies, shall be and are, in virtue of this present act, fully and finally repealed and annulled from and after the day of before which time all his Majesty's British forces in North America shall be recalled from thence, and also all civil officers and servants of the British crown, shall be commanded and caused to resign their respective offices, posts, places and employments, and to withdraw from thence, except such as his Majesty, in virtue of his prerogative as sovereign of any of the said free and independent states shall appoint, or cause to be appointed anew to the like or other offices or employments in any of the said states respectively.

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IN addition to what the reader would find in my tenth Letter and the notes subjoined, (to which I beg leave to refer him) as heads for the materials of the grand league and confederacy, by which I propose to secure our monopoly of the North American commerce, and to improve to the utmost of what they are capable, the various advantages of that connection; I shall now add, for the satisfaction of those not deeply conversant in subjects of this kind, but whose opinions in the general mass may nevertheless be of importance, a few more hints of such matters as would obviously become the proper objects of treaty and subjects of stipulation on this great occasion.

It might perhaps be right to establish the use of British money *only* as the lawful, current coin throughout British America; with a condition that each state should send in its proportion of bullion to the Mint, or grant Great-Britain an equivalent for the use of *her* money.—It might perhaps be proper and necessary that some small central island or district, lying on the Atlantic sea, should be ceded to Great-Britain for the residence of the British ambassador-general and plenipotentiary to the said states, and the head-quarters of the admiral; for the establishing a British court of admiralty for the more convenient dispatch of naval business upon the spot; and for other purposes of a like nature, appertaining to the naval dominion and umpireship of the crown of Great-Britain: as well as a well-situated port upon the lakes for the same purpose; such as Lake St. Claire lying between the Lakes Erie and Huron.—Would it not be reasonable for the British American states, as in a manner the political wards of Great-Britain and relying wholly on her for external protection, totally to incapacitate themselves for entering into any treaties or alliances with any foreign powers whatsoever?—Might it not be eligible to admit of and join in constituting a general continental congress, to which each state should send one delegate, and which should never assemble but on the summons of the British ambassador general? The business of this congress to be treaty not government, and only to
 • deliberate on peace and war, and such other occasional matters

matters as might be of general concernment; in order to the facilitating and dispatch of general business, and easing the British ambassador general of the trouble of personally consulting with, or the inconvenience attending the entrusting such affairs to his deputy the *resident consul* in, each separate state.—For the ease and convenience of the respective states, they might permit subordinate courts of admiralty to be held by Great-Britain, under due restrictions, in such of their sea-port towns along the coast as might be convenient.—As it would be impossible to prevent an indiscriminate mixture of British and of British American seamen in the ships of either country: so it might be proper for the said states to consent that seamen for the royal navy should be raised promiscuously from amongst the mariners of both, according to the present customs of the service; but not however to suffer impressing by land.—Consistently with our rights of naval dominion as set forth in the above draught, and in order that it may answer the beneficial purposes proposed by the grand league and confederacy, we ought to insist that no sea-port, or other place along the sea-coasts, or the shores of the rivers or lakes, shall have any fortifications within the reach of cannon-shot from the shore. But in a case of necessity in time of war, it might be agreed in general congress that temporary batteries or other fortifications should be erected, provided they were put into the possession and under the command of the British flag.—*Quere*, Whether it might not be for the general peace and welfare of, and preserve the balance of power between, the several states, should it be agreed also in general congress, that no interior fortifications of any kind should ever be erected within any of them?—In order to prevent all suspicions to the prejudice of Great-Britain's equitable dealing with the confederated states and her faithful guardianship of them, she should not be entitled to make any extraordinary demand upon them for any *cautionary* or *preparatory* naval armament: but from the time when war was actually declared against any *maritime* power until the same should be concluded, they should contribute subsidies in such proportions to their ability as should be regulated in general congress, the whole bearing an established proportion to

the extraordinary naval expences of Great-Britain as originally settled in forming the Grand British League and Confederacy.—In case any two or more of the said states should, in contempt of the umpireship of Great-Britain and the interposition of the British ambassador-general, go to war or carry on hostilities one against the other, the admiral of North America and all other British naval commanders should have orders to make prize of all ships, vessels and merchandize, (all fishing shallops, boats and skiffs having *no decks*, together with their fish and fishing implements excepted) belonging to that state or those states which should be previously deemed and pronounced by the parliament of Great-Britain, in a Declaratory Act for that express purpose, to be the offending state or states; and the said naval commanders should continue to distress the trade of the same by sea to the utmost of their power, until the said state or states should be brought to reason; of which his Majesty in council should be the temporary judge, and have power to stay all farther prizals until parliament should, in another declaratory act, restore the said offending state or states, having made due satisfaction, to its or their former beneficiary situation as a party in the Grand British League and Confederacy.—And for the more effectually preserving the future balance of power between all the states of that immense continent, might it not be expedient that the limits and boundaries of each, which they should never hereafter pass, should be newly defined by the Grand British League and Confederacy; and some of their nominal interior boundaries now lying very far within the wilderness, be changed for others at a nearer distance?—For the same good purpose and other apparent good reasons, might not the remainder of the wilderness be partitioned out into certain determinate and limited tracts, according to soil and situation; each of which should be considered as the territory of some future state which in process of time might be therein erected. And I would propose that no interruption should be given to the growing of such new states (other than every government has a right to give by wholesome laws within itself to prevent as much as may be a spirit or practice of emigration;) but that until the settlers within any such partitioned

partitioned tract of the wilderness should be increased and multiplied to the number of fifty thousand souls, they should be considered as incapable of forming an independent political state, and be subject for the intermediate time to the government of Great-Britain. But as soon as their numbers should amount to fifty thousands souls as aforesaid, they should be entitled and free to erect themselves into an independent political state, and to constitute for their own government such a legislative power as they should judge most proper; provided only that they acknowledged the king of Great-Britain as their lawful sovereign, that they made the protestant faith the established religion of the country, and consented to become a party to the Grand British League and Confederacy.

During the short space of time indeed that remains of that winter's day to the evening of which we may hope to continue the despotic lords of North America, those immense divisions of country we have affected to make by our charters and by act of parliament on a late memorable occasion, may, like all other arbitrary compendiums, be *convenient to us*, so long as we determine to continue arbitrary rulers; or it might hereafter be favourable to the ambition of some one American state hungering to swallow up its neighbours, to have its territory like that of the ambitious Catherine reaching from the salt ocean to the fresh-water seas in midland, and thence to the salt ocean again quite across the vast continent; but in neither case would it be desirable or good for *the people of those countries*. Nations are most free and happy when their extremities are near enough to the vital seat of government to feel its pervading principle in its full warmth and activity, and by the spring of their own re-action to pour into the heart again full-flowing tides of health, life and vigour. On these principles I should wish to see the North American states aranged back to back like habitations in a well-built city, leaving those yet to rise into being to front the lakes and great rivers St. Lawrence and Mississippi, as the present ones do the Atlantic sea. We have already enumerated in the foregoing draught for an act of parliament eighteen states already formed; and by such a division of the remaining country by the grand confederacy as we

the extraordinary naval expences of Great-Britain as originally settled in forming the Grand British League and Confederacy.—In case any two or more of the said states should, in contempt of the umpireship of Great-Britain and the interposition of the British ambassador-general, go to war or carry on hostilities one against the other, the admiral of North America and all other British naval commanders should have orders to make prize of all ships, vessels and merchandize, (all fishing shallops, boats and skiffs having *no decks*, together with their fish and fishing implements excepted) belonging to that state or those states which should be previously deemed and pronounced by the parliament of Great-Britain, in a Declaratory Act for that express purpose, to be the offending state or states; and the said naval commanders should continue to distress the trade of the same by sea to the utmost of their power, until the said state or states should be brought to reason; of which his Majesty in council should be the temporary judge, and have power to stay all farther prizals until parliament should, in another declaratory act, restore the said offending state or states, having made due satisfaction, to its or their former beneficiary situation as a party in the Grand British League and Confederacy.—And for the more effectually preserving the future balance of power between all the states of that immense continent, might it not be expedient that the limits and boundaries of each, which they should never hereafter pass, should be newly defined by the Grand British League and Confederacy; and some of their nominal interior boundaries now lying very far within the wilderness, be changed for others at a nearer distance?—For the same good purpose and other apparent good reasons, might not the remainder of the wilderness be partitioned out into certain determinate and limited tracts, according to soil and situation; each of which should be considered as the territory of some future state which in process of time might be therein erected. And I would propose that no interruption should be given to the growing of such new states (other than every government has a right to give by wholesome laws within itself to prevent as much as may be a spirit or practice of emigration;) but that until the settlers within any such partitioned

partitioned tract of the wilderness should be increased and multiplied to the number of fifty thousand souls, they should be considered as incapable of forming an independent political state, and be subject for the intermediate time to the government of Great-Britain. But as soon as their numbers should amount to fifty thousands souls as aforesaid, they should be entitled and free to erect themselves into an independent political state, and to constitute for their own government such a legislative power as they should judge most proper; provided only that they acknowledged the king of Great-Britain as their lawful sovereign, that they made the protestant faith the established religion of the country, and consented to become a party to the Grand British League and Confederacy.

During the short space of time indeed that remains of that winter's day to the evening of which we may hope to continue the despotic lords of North America, those immense divisions of country we have affected to make by our charters and by act of parliament on a late memorable occasion, may, like all other arbitrary compendiums, be *convenient to us*, so long as we determine to continue arbitrary rulers; or it might hereafter be favourable to the ambition of some one American state hungering to swallow up its neighbours, to have its territory like that of the ambitious Catherine reaching from the salt ocean to the fresh-water seas in midland, and thence to the salt ocean again quite across the vast continent; but in neither case would it be desirable or good for *the people of those countries*. Nations are most free and happy when their extremities are near enough to the vital seat of government to feel its pervading principle in its full warmth and activity, and by the spring of their own re-action to pour into the heart again full-flowing tides of health, life and vigour. On these principles I should wish to see the North American states aranged back to back like habitations in a well-built city, leaving those yet to rise into being to front the lakes and great rivers St. Lawrence and Mississippi, as the present ones do the Atlantic sea. We have already enumerated in the foregoing draught for an act of parliament eighteen states already formed; and by such a division of the remaining country by the grand confederacy as we

have proposed, provision might be made for the future gradual and quiet establishment of nineteen more at least, all of ample extent, and every one having a very considerable frontier accessible to shipping and upon waters which are at this time navigated by the British navy. Thus each of these numerous states, by the same means that would enable it through commerce to become a respectable member of the grand British confederacy, would be effectually subject to the controul and influence of Great-Britain their common maritime protector and umpire, so necessary for preserving the harmony of the whole. According to this system no state adjoining to the two great rivers should possess the shores on both sides; as navigations of such magnitude and importance should be always boundaries and frontier. The reasons are obvious.

If we cast our eyes over an American map, and view attentively the singular distribution of land and water, and the directions of the two capital rivers; and if we then consider what hath already taken place in the establishment of a long range of narrow-fronted states along the sea-coast throughout its whole extent; we shall possibly be led to conclude that the plan we recommend is the plain suggestion of Providence, who from the first hath hitherto wrought according to it himself, and seems to have made its future observance and completion an obvious dictate of nature to all parties concerned, but most so to Great-Britain. In order to illustrate what I have said to this effect, let me just mention such alterations of boundaries and trace out such districts of future dominion as strike my own eye, and carry an appearance of equality and propriety well adapted to the nature of the supposed confederacy so far as they can be judged of by the map; this being sufficient for all present purposes; that is for those of explanation.

To begin then with Quebec, I should not content myself with reducing it to the same size as before its late enormous extension; but I would propose that it should be bounded to the N. E. at the river Saguenay, and to the S. W. by the river Atawas: it would then have a maritime frontier of two hundred miles. And making the lakes of St. John, St. Peter, Beuhamois, Abitibi and
Temis-

Temiscaming its respective interior limits westward and northward, it would be about 360 miles in length. There would then be left a country of about equal surface, though with a larger frontier to the water, between Quebec and Labrador, which latter commences at the river St. John in the gulph of St. Lawrence, as one of those districts to be appointed as above-mentioned for the seat of a future nation. This country for the present by way of distinction may be called Tadousacaia [1], after the name of one of its ancient tribes of Indians. Montreal [2] might be the capital of another state which should extend from that city and the aforesaid river Atawas up the river St. Lawrence and Catarakui as far as Lake Ontario; the chain of streams and small lakes lying between Fort Frontenac and the east-end of Lake Huron being its limit to the S. W. Lake Huron itself from the little Lake Huron to French River its western confine; and Lake Nipissin together with River Atawas its boundary to the north. The ancient Huronia [3] having Montreal to the N. E. and for the rest completely incircled by the waters of the Ontario, the Oswego and Huron Lakes, is by nature formed into another territory. The next will extend along the whole north-shore of Lake Huron from French River to the falls of St. Mary, and bordering on Montreal and Quebec might retain the appellation of Canada [4]. The shores of Lake Superior will furnish ample frontier to four states more. The first, or Menfispia [5], beginning at the aforesaid falls of St. Mary and terminating at the river which forms the discharge of Lake Alemipigon; the second, or Camanestigonina [6], at Long Lake which receives the overflowings of the Lake of the Woods; the third, or Missisagania [7], at the Bay of St. Charles; and the fourth, or Puania [8], will pass the strait and reach as far as the River Outagamis at the bottom of the Bay of Puans. The two latter will also have other navigable frontiers on the Mississippi; Missisagania being watered by that river from the rivulet of Ouabaougetan to the falls of St. Anthony,

[1] Tadousacaia.

[2] Montreal.

[3] Huronia.

[4] Canada.

[5] Menfispia.

[6] Camanestigonina.

[7] Missisagania.

[8] Puania.

thony, and Puania from the said falls to the river Ouifconfin. Then again Mascoutenia [9] having the Mississippi to the S. W. from the River Ouifconfin to the Illinois river, might also have a maritime frontier from the bottom of the Bay of Puans above-mentioned to the River St. Joseph at the south-end of Lake Michigan; while Miamiſia [10] like Huronia would be washed by the waters of three lakes, Michigan, Huron and Erie as far as the river Miamis. The south shores of Lake Erie or Ofwego, and as they incline N. E. until they reach Ochureni, might be allotted to Erieland [11]; from thence to Ofwego Fort and Bay in Lake Ontario, to Senekania [12]; and Catarakua might take in the rest of the lake, all the river Catarakui [13] N. E. to La Prairie, then turning south again all Richlieu river and the west shore of Lake Champlain as far as Crown Point. The east shore of this lake and the said river Richlieu, together with the south-east shore of the St. Lawrence as far as Wolf River opposite the Saguenay, would belong to Champlania [14]; and the remainder of the river St. Lawrence together with the coast of the gulph as far as the river Ristigouchi in Miramichi Bay, (which I would also propose for the confine of Nova-Scotia) would give a very extensive maritime frontier to Gaspesia [15]. Again, we shall find still remaining upon the Mississippi below the river Illinois, which we made the southern boundary of Mascoutenia, sufficient frontier for three extensive territories: the first, or Wauwautania [16], reaching as far as the Ohio; and the other two, Chicafawria [17] and Chactawria [18] divided into equal districts, will bring us to the present boundary of West Florida lying in 31° of north latitude. And it might not be amiss perhaps to set apart the Province of Sagadahock from New England and make it an independent state.

From the point of confluence between the waters of the Great Miomee with those of the Ohio, as a center, might

- [9] Mascoutenia.
- [10] Miamiſia.
- [11] Erieland.
- [12] Senekania.
- [13] Catarakua.
- [14] Champlania.

- [15] Gaspesia.
- [16] Wauwautania.
- [17] Chicafawria.
- [18] Chactawria.
- [19] Sagadahock.

might diverge several lines of interior separation, thus ;— Suppose one line to run due south till it should intersect the northern limit of East Florida ; this would divide all the lower nations on the Mississippi from Virginia and the southern colonies fronting the Atlantic. A second line from the same point north-west-ward to the junction of the two rivers Illinois and Theakiki called the Fork, would separate Wauwautania and Miamiia. A third in the direction of the courses of the Great Miomee and Miami rivers, would divide Miamiia from Erieland. And a fourth being formed by the winding course of the Ohio itself as high as the site of the late fort called Du Quesne would separate Virginia and Pennsylvania from Erieland. Then a new division line might begin at the said site of fort Du Quesne, and leaving the Ohio to the westward, and passing along the Allegany Mountains, might take a pretty strait course to Lake George, and thence to the south end of Lake Champlain ; thence again N. E. to the northern bend of the river St. John on the present confines of New England and Nova Scotia ; forming the interior confine of all the northern colonies on the Atlantic to that point, as well as of the above-mentioned districts bordering on Lake Ontario, the Catarakui and St. Lawrence. Then a line from Ochureni to Du Quesne would part Erieland from Senekania. A line also from the Bay of Oswego on Lake Ontario that should intersect at the nearest point the grand division line running N. E. and S. W. would separate Senekania from Catarakua. And another line to come from Wolfe River which empties itself into the St. Lawrence opposite the river Saguenay to the termination of the last-mentioned one at the said bend of the river St. John, and thence falling into the river Ristigouchi which hath its discharge into the gulph at the Bay of Miramichi, would bound Gaspesia towards Nova Scotia, Sagadahock and Champlain, and complete the general sketch of our proposed divisions.—

Thus, as I have said before, to the eighteen states already enumerated, we might by a prudent foresight cause all future additions to the number to be so made as that none should be too large or too small, all having an ample surface, and an extensive maritime frontier, and being thereby
every

every way calculated for being hereafter joined with the rest of the free and independent states in the grand British confederacy. And thus, by acknowledging and guaranteeing to the colonies a *legislative independence*, provision would be made that the whole of the immense continent of North America, so far as it is yet known, should be all kept *with great ease and little expence* in a voluntary and therefore a sure *commercial dependence* upon Great-Britain. But if she persist in the folly or rather the insanity of thinking to effect the same end by making her own parliament the general fountain of legislative authority and government to such a swarm of far distant and hardy nations, I fear it is high time that she were let blood, severely purged, and kept for a while on low diet as the only cure of her unhappy distemper. I wish even those remedies may be in time to save her life.

EVEN

EVEN these rude deficient draughts of an Emancipating Act and Grand British League and Confederacy, and a new division of country, would, I should hope, when duly weighed by the candid and sincere friends of this country, be enough to convince them that we may grant *even more, than the colonists ask at our hands*, and yet be in no danger of losing that influence (which is only another word for *sovereignty*, so far as it can be really beneficial to Great-Britain) over them, from which we have hitherto while in their infancy only derived such immense advantages. Those brave men who now shudder at the thoughts of imbruing their hands in the blood of *fellow-citizens* and *fellow-subjects* nobly contending for liberty, would not have a scruple of drawing their swords against *the subjects of a foreign* independent state which had been guilty of breaking through the solemn engagements of a treaty it had expressly bound itself to observe. But supposing the wisdom of parliament after mature deliberation to proceed upon these hints and on the same principles to frame a finished work, how noble a production it would appear! The colonists would hereby enjoy civil freedom and legislative independence to their hearts content; and yet remain in a state of absolute commercial dependence to this kingdom. But what commercial country is independent? Not Great-Britain herself. She is absolutely dependent, in a commercial sense, upon every country that favours her with a market. She is more particularly dependent upon her own colonies, as they contribute the most largely to the means of her preservation. Commerce in its very idea signifies a *voluntary* intercourse and exchange of commodities for the mutual benefit of the parties: and nothing can be more certain than that the sword and sceptre are *the worst of all instruments* for carrying it on to advantage, though necessary indeed for its guard and protection. Let us then no longer convert them into implements of mischief, nor degrade them into instruments of punishment, but apply them to their right use! Supposing we should be able to hold the colonies

in subjection for half a century longer (which is not a supposition that many will grant me); they would always be discontented and factious, and consider their obedience as an act of mere political necessity. Thinking themselves injured, and therefore morally free from the obligation of complying any farther than they needs must, they would undoubtedly seize the first opportunity in some time of our weakness or embarrassment to revolt, and then of course, as of necessity, would become our enemies. Whereas, supposing them emancipated and to have entered into the proposed League and Confederacy, they would entertain no jealousy of our having designs against their liberties, they would have nothing to interrupt or disturb their domestic peace and industry, no temptation to quarrel with us, no power to hurt us: and the protective alliance and confederacy entered into with us being a voluntary, a beneficial, formal and solemn covenant on their part, they would feel all the consciousness of a moral obligation of the most binding nature to abide by and fulfil the conditions of them; and could not but view the breach of them as an act of guilt, baseness and ingratitude for which, as there would be no temptation, so there could be no excuse. In the latter case all good men, even amongst themselves, would be against them; in the former, they would be sure of their pity, their goodwill and secret aid, if not their open support and assistance, as we may behold at this day. How much these considerations are to be esteemed worthy of attention; and how powerful an influence full persuasions in the minds of men of right or of wrong have upon the affairs of civil society, I leave to every wise man and sound politician to determine.

Now, was it not that it might be artfully urged against me and resolved into that kind of enthusiasm which by hacknied courtiers and their base-minded train is with a sneer insinuated to be the sure mark of a true visionary and an indubitable proof that nothing sound and practical can come from such a person, I would here declare myself so thoroughly assured of the moral infallibility of the measures I have suggested for producing the effects proposed, that was I in rank or station so near the throne of the best of
princes

princes as to be entitled to make him a personal offer of my council, I would stand forth alone if there were none to join me, to propose and recommend them in the most earnest manner; content, should they be found to fail or even to fall short of what I foretold, to be branded as a traitor, and to be publicly proscribed as a curse to my country with a price set upon my head, so that "every man's hand should be against me."

THE END.



ERRATA.

DEDICATION.

Page 3—line 25, for *induces*, read *endues*.

9	17,	<i>guides. Under—guides; under</i>
9	21,	<i>humility. In—humility; in</i>
10	32,	<i>Epicurus's—Epicurus'</i>
13	23,	<i>foolish—selfish</i>

PREFACE.

Page 1—line 9, for *whatsoever, except* rd. *whatsoever. Except*
11, after *America* a comma
12, after *party* a semicolon

FIRST PART.

Page 15—line 5, for *will have*, read *affect to call*.

16	11,	at the period after the word <i>principles</i> should stand the † and not at the period in line 13.
20	30,	for <i>conceal</i> ,— <i>cancel</i> .
23	43,	and last, the word <i>men</i> should be printed with a capital <i>M</i> .
28	5,	<i>in frail</i> ,— <i>in the frail</i> .
35	17,	<i>forbid</i> — <i>forbad</i>
36	13,	<i>to be although</i> — <i>to be. Although</i>
38	22,	<i>no credit</i> — <i>no established name for veracity</i> .
39	29,	<i>internal</i> — <i>eternal</i>
46	33,	<i>tract</i> — <i>traffs</i>
47	33,	<i>the</i> — <i>their</i>
50	10,	<i>carried upon</i> — <i>carried on upon</i>
56	14,	<i>retained</i> — <i>retain</i>
57		Change the notes thus ;—to the first prefix the † ; to the second, the ‡ ; and to the third, the *.